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*President*: Mr. Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**Agenda item 18**

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

**Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/54/23 (Parts I-III))**

**Reports of the Secretary-General (A/54/337, A/54/119, A/54/219)**

**Draft resolutions (A/54/L.50, A/54/23 (Part III), chapter XIII, G, paragraph 7)**

**The President:** I call on the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Mr. Fayssal Mekdad of the Syrian Arab Republic, to introduce the report of the Special Committee.

**Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: As Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I have the honour to present the report of the Special Committee for consideration by the General Assembly. The report is contained in document A/54/23, Parts I to III, and covers the work the Special Committee carried out during 1999.

The report is being submitted in accordance with paragraph 11 of resolution 53/68 regarding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in which the Special Committee was requested to continue its efforts for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the General Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in all territories that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination.

In an effort to rationalize its work and to facilitate the consideration of this item by the General Assembly, the Special Committee has restructured its report into three parts rather than the usual nine. All of its recommendations for action by the General Assembly for this year are set out in Part III.

Part I contains the general introductory chapters, which describe the organization and activities of the Committee, the meetings it organized to consider all the matters it was entrusted with, and its relations with other United Nations bodies and with intergovernmental, non-governmental and regional organizations. I draw attention

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in particular to section J of Part I, which outlines the future programme of work that the Committee intends to carry out during 2000, which is the last year of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. For the first time, Part I also includes as an annex the report of the Caribbean Regional Seminar to review the political, economic and social conditions in the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, held in Saint Lucia, which is thus being made more easily available to the members of the General Assembly. The Special Committee took into consideration the recommendations of that seminar in formulating its future plans.

Part II of the report covers the Committee's deliberations regarding the substantive issues on its agenda. These include the dissemination of information on decolonization; the question of sending visiting missions to the Territories; economic and other activities that affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories; military activities carried out by the administering Powers in the Territories under their administration; and the implementation of the Declaration by specialized agencies and international institutions. It also contains information from the Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 of the Charter of the United Nations and describes the actions taken by the Committee regarding each of the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Finally, as stated earlier, part III of the report in document A/54/23 contains all the recommendations of the Special Committee. The draft resolutions and decisions will be presented in proper order by the Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in his report to the General Assembly.

The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples has formulated specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism. It has examined the implementation by Member States of resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions on decolonization. It has continued to pay special attention to the small Territories and to recommend the most suitable steps which would enable the people of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination; it has taken steps to enlist worldwide support among Governments and regional, national and international organizations to achieve the objectives of the Declaration and to implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. It has requested the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to provide economic, social and other assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. It has made much effort to engage the administering Powers in a dialogue to seek their cooperation in the discharge of the mandate entrusted to it and for all administering Powers to work formally with the Special Committee.

The proposals presented by the Special Committee are based on a case-by-case examination of the Territories under its mandate. These have been formulated and adopted after due consideration of all aspects of the situation prevailing in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, including the constitutional and political situation and socio-economic developments. Working papers prepared by the Secretariat have provided substantive information and data on each Non-Self-Governing Territory. These working papers are based on information provided by the administering Powers under Article 73 *e* of the Charter. Valuable information has also been received from representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, who participate in the meetings of the Special Committee and in its regional seminars. Media reports and information provided by regional non-governmental organizations and experts have also been useful sources. It is the view of the Special Committee that sending visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves would be the best way of gaining first-hand knowledge and would provide an opportunity to review the situation on the ground. The Special Committee has not been able to do this for some time now. However, in its absence, the regional seminars have provided a close alternative when held in the vicinity of some of the Territories. They serve as an opportunity for Committee members to have direct contact with some of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in environments similar to their own. These regional seminars have been crucial in bringing together representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories, Non-governmental organizations, experts and scholars to interact and exchange views on changes and developments in the Territories. They share information on issues of common concern, present papers and propose actions relevant to the question of decolonization and have direct access to the members of the Special Committee in an informal environment in order to discuss their views and concerns. I draw the Assembly's attention again to the report of the Caribbean Regional Seminar annexed to part I of the Committee's report.

However, as part of the critical review of its work initiated by the Special Committee, and in a spirit of

transparency and cooperation, informal consultations with the administering Powers have been carried out during the period under review. These consultations have sought the cooperation of the administering Powers within the context of a renewed dialogue. During the period under review, Portugal participated in the work of the Special Committee in relation to East Timor, France participated in relation to New Caledonia and New Zealand in relation to Tokelau. The Committee also acceded to the requests of Spain to participate in the proceedings on the question of Gibraltar and to the delegations of Argentina and Uruguay — on behalf of the States members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) plus Bolivia and Chile — to participate in the consideration of the item on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

This year, the Special Committee, pursuant to its decision of 11 August 1998 concerning Puerto Rico considered a report on this issue and adopted a resolution (A/AC.109/1999/28). By the terms of its resolution, the Special Committee reaffirmed the hope that the Government of the United States of America will expedite a process that will allow the people of Puerto Rico to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, in conformity with resolution 1514 (XV) and resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee on Puerto Rico. It also encouraged the Government of the United States to order the halt of its armed forces military drills and manoeuvres on Vieques island and to return the occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico.

The Special Committee has discharged the tasks entrusted to it by the Assembly during the year in a cooperative, transparent and pragmatic effort, with both formal and informal meetings, to reach agreements and formulate its recommendations. It has held wide consultations with its members, as well as with other Member States, administering Powers and representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Altogether it has held 16 formal meetings and 22 informal meetings and consultations. Allow me, very briefly, to outline some of the actions and recommendations being put before the Assembly for its consideration.

The Special Committee examined the issue of information regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories being transmitted to the Secretary-General under Article 73 *e* of the United Nations Charter. It has reiterated its recommendation to the General Assembly that, in the absence of a decision by the Assembly itself to the effect that a Territory had attained a full measure of self-government in the terms of Chapter XI of the Charter, the administering Power concerned should continue to transmit information under Article 73 *e* with respect to that Territory.

In its consideration of the question of economic and other activities that affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the Special Committee affirms the value of foreign economic investment undertaken in collaboration with the peoples of the Territories. It reaffirms the responsibility of the administering Powers to promote economic advancement in Territories under their administration. At the same time, the Special Committee also affirms the need to avoid any economic and other activities that would adversely affect the interests of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Therefore, the Special Committee recommends, among other things, that the Assembly urge the administering Powers to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable right of peoples in Non-Self-Governing Territories to their natural resources, and requests the administering Powers to take all necessary steps to protect the property rights of the peoples of those Territories.

The Special Committee has continued to pay special attention to the needs of the small island Territories. Their unique problems, arising from their small size and population, their limited natural resources and their vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, require the sustained cooperation and assistance of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system. Reaffirming that the exercise of the right of self-determination by Non-Self-Governing Territories entails, as a corollary, the extension of all appropriate assistance to their inhabitants, the Special Committee paid particular attention to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations. It welcomes the assistance provided so far, but notes that only some specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system have been involved in providing assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories. It urges those agencies and organizations that have not yet provided assistance to do so as soon as possible. The Special Committee will continue to consult with the Economic and Social Council in its efforts to implement the Declaration.

In particular, the Special Committee requests the specialized agencies and other organizations to provide information on the special needs and vulnerabilities of

small island Territories, including ways and means to assist the Territories in fighting drug trafficking and other criminal activities. In this regard, the Special Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it request the relevant agencies, organizations and institutions of the United Nations system to strengthen existing measures of support and to formulate appropriate programmes of assistance to the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, within the framework of their respective mandates, in order to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of those Territories.

In addition, the Special Committee also recommends that the General Assembly welcome the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of resolution 574 (XVII). This resolution calls for the provision of necessary mechanisms to permit its associate members, including the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate — subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly — in certain special sessions of the General Assembly in which the Territories originally participated as observers, and in the work of the Economic and Social Council.

In 1999 the Special Committee continued to examine the question of military activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories. It reaffirms its strong conviction that the existence of military activities and installations in Non-Self-Governing Territories could constitute an obstacle to the exercise of self-determination. It urges administering Powers to take all necessary measures not to involve those Territories in any offensive acts or acts of interference against other States. It reiterates that the Territories and adjacent areas should not be used for nuclear tests, dumping of nuclear waste or deployment of nuclear weapons. Further, it deplores the continued alienation of land, particularly in the small island Territories of the Pacific and the Caribbean, for military installations. While taking note of the decision of some administering Powers to downsize their military presence in Non-Self-Governing Territories, the Special Committee calls once again upon the administering Powers to terminate military activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories and to eliminate their bases in these Territories, in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

Regarding the dissemination of information, the Special Committee has remained mindful of the importance of public opinion and the support of Governments, non-governmental organizations and other institutions in effectively assisting the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories achieve self-determination. Consequently, the Special Committee has deemed it important that the Department of Public Information continue to disseminate information on decolonization through all available media, including publications, radio, television and the Internet. I should like to point out, in this respect, the effective participation of the Department of Public Information in publicizing the proceedings of the Caribbean Regional Seminar, held in Saint Lucia in May 1999. Furthermore, before the end of this year, with the assistance of the Department of Public Information, a Web site on decolonization is to be launched on the Internet.

During the last year, the Special Committee continued to monitor and examine the situation in each Territory under its mandate and to hold hearings at which it considered the views of representatives of the Territories and of non-governmental organizations, as well as of other experts. As noted earlier, part III of the Special Committee's report contains its complete recommendations to the General Assembly regarding individual Territories. I refer members to the relevant sections of the report, while highlighting here some selected recommendations.

In the interests of all the people of New Caledonia, and building on the positive outcome of the review of the Matignon and Nouméa Accords, the Special Committee urges all parties involved to maintain their dialogue in a spirit of harmony and to continue promoting a framework for the peaceful progress of the Territory towards an act of self-determination in which all options are open and which would safeguard the rights of all New Caledonians according to the letter and the spirit of the Matignon and Nouméa Accords.

The Special Committee also considered 11 small island Territories: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands. In general, it continues to reaffirm the responsibility of the administering Powers under the Charter to promote the economic and social development of the Territories under their administration. The Special Committee took note of the conditions prevailing in the Territories and calls upon the administering Powers to undertake specific measures with regard to each Territory. It also calls upon the administering Powers to continue to take all measures to counter problems related to drug trafficking, money laundering and other criminal offences.

With regard to Tokelau, the Special Committee noted the firm commitment of the Territory to the development of self-government and to an act of self-determination and, in this regard, noted the inauguration in 1999 of a national Government based on village elections by universal adult suffrage. It commends Tokelau for its ongoing work in charting a distinctive, constitutional course which reflects its unique traditions and environment. It notes with appreciation the continuing exemplary cooperation of the administering Power, New Zealand, in the work of the Special Committee, and in particular, its readiness to permit access of visiting missions to the Territory.

Before concluding, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat teams of both Ms. Maria Maldonado from the Department of Political Affairs and Mr. Mohammad Sattar of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services for their most professional assistance to the Special Committee throughout the year, which has enabled us to carry out our programme of work promptly and efficiently.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the Special Committee has benefited greatly from the active participation of representatives of territorial Governments, regional intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations, as well as experts and representatives of some administering Powers, in the work of the Special Committee. The contributions made by these individuals have provided invaluable information and insights, and their observations and recommendations have inevitably and properly been reflected in many of the Special Committee's recommendations to the General Assembly.

Only one year remains before the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. A lot of work still awaits all States Members of the United Nations and the international community at large to achieve the noble objectives of the Decade. The Special Committee looks forward to working closely with all administering Powers and the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to ascertain the wishes of the people, on the basis of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The Committee is committed to ensuring that the last year of the Decade is productive and puts into place a framework for future progress.

**The President:** I give the floor to the representative of Papua New Guinea to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.50.

**Mr. Donigi** (Papua New Guinea): I am honoured to address the General Assembly on the occasion of the consideration of the question of the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This is the first time I address the Assembly in my capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It has certainly been a privilege for Papua New Guinea to have been honoured with the important responsibility of chairing the Special Committee at this important time in the work of the United Nations on decolonization.

The Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples has just introduced the Committee's report, contained in document A/54/23, on its work during the current year. The recommendations put forward by the Committee for the Assembly's approval have been the subject of a great deal of discussion and dialogue in the Committee, with the administering Powers and other concerned members, as well as with the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The 1999 session of the Special Committee has seen progress in the critical review the Committee has carried out in order to improve its effectiveness in discharging the mandate the General Assembly entrusted to it. In this regard, the Committee considers that the cooperation of the administering Powers is essential to the implementation of the 1960 Declaration and other United Nations resolutions on decolonization. The Committee has therefore sought to strengthen the mechanisms for consultation and dialogue with the administering Powers. Thus, the Committee succeeded this year in setting up guidelines, albeit informal, for consultations with the administering Powers and endeavoured to lay down a conceptual framework for its future work.

The informal consultations thus far held with the administering Powers have been encouraging and point to the possibility of establishing closer and purposeful cooperation in the coming months. In addition, the Committee will certainly continue to invite the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as it has in the past.

I turn now to the draft resolution on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of

Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to introduce the text, as contained in document A/54/L.50. I am speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution. The following countries have also co-sponsored the draft resolution: Chile, Indonesia, Iraq, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe.

The draft resolution before the Assembly reiterates the principles guiding the work of the United Nations on decolonization and lay down the main responsibilities of the Committee in this regard.

By its operative part, the draft resolution reaffirms General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and all other resolutions on decolonization, including resolution 43/47, which declared the decade that began in 1990 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and calls upon the administering Powers, in accordance with those resolutions, to take all necessary steps to enable the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories concerned to exercise fully as soon as possible their right to self-determination, including independence.

By adopting this draft resolution, the Assembly would take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the plan of action of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. It would also approve the report of the Special Committee covering its work during 1999 and including its programme of work envisaged for the year 2000. In this regard, by the terms of the draft resolution, the Assembly would request the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In particular, the Special Committee would be asked to continue to formulate specific proposals to bring an end to colonialism and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

The Special Committee is also expected to continue to pay special attention to the small Territories, including through the dispatch of visiting missions, and to recommend to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. The Special Committee is also asked to develop a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories before the end of the year 2000 to facilitate the implementation of the Committee's mandate and the relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions on specific Territories.

The draft resolution also calls upon the administering Powers that have not participated formally in the work of the Special Committee to do so at its session in the year 2000.

Operative paragraph 10 of the draft resolution is a result of dialogue with all interested parties and calls on administering Powers to ensure that all economic activities in the Territories concerned do not adversely affect the interests of the peoples but instead promote development and assist these peoples in the exercise of their right to self-determination.

Operative paragraph 11 calls on the administering Powers to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable rights of the peoples of the Territories to their natural resources. The sponsors have included land as a natural resource in this operative paragraph because the Special Committee has been informed of a desire by petitioners from one particular Territory that all unused and excess land not required for military purposes be returned to the original landowners.

The draft resolution borrows language from the draft decision on military activities in operative paragraph 12. This is considered a positive step to stress that military activities should not run counter to the rights and interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, especially their right to self-determination, including independence. It calls upon the administering Powers concerned to eliminate the remaining military bases in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution also requests the Secretary-General, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to provide economic, social and other assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Lastly, it requests the Secretary-General to provide the Special Committee with the facilities and services it requires to carry out its mandate as it implements resolutions and decisions on decolonization adopted by the General Assembly and the Special Committee.

In presenting this draft resolution to the General Assembly, I should like to emphasize that the sponsors made every effort to take into account the views of other Member States, including the views and written suggestions submitted by the European Union.

The delegations sponsoring the draft resolution welcome the European Union's initiative to participate in consultations and dialogue on decolonization issues. In fact, the transparency and spirit of cooperation prevailing in our consultations augur well for continuing and constructive dialogue in future.

Before concluding, I should like to underscore several matters. First, 1999 has seen continued cooperation between the delegation of New Zealand as an administering Power and Portugal in the formal work of the Committee. Their participation has contributed in some measure in the progress in informal discussions between the Committee and the administering Powers.

Secondly, I should also acknowledge that France, as an administering Power in New Caledonia, has also cooperated informally and has this year invited on a bilateral basis a ministerial mission from the Forum island States and some representatives of the Pacific States present here in New York to visit New Caledonia. I was honoured to lead the delegation from New York. The report of our delegation will be made available to Member States in due course.

Thirdly, as guidelines for future informal dialogue between administering Powers and the members of the Special Committee have been agreed to, it is hoped that progress can be made in the development of a programme of work for each Non-Self-Governing Territory before the end of the year 2000. This is important, as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism will end next year, and a new set of mandates should be developed for these Territories for the year 2001 and beyond.

Lastly, during 1999 the Special Committee has continued to receive the facilities and services it has required for its work, including substantive and technical support from the Secretariat. I should like, in this regard, to express to the Secretary-General, on behalf of the Special Committee, our sincere appreciation for and satisfaction with the arrangements made to assist the Special Committee in the discharge of its mandate. It is essential that such services and facilities continue to be provided for the smooth functioning of the Special Committee.

In concluding, I should like to ask all Member States to consider positively the recommendations contained in the present draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples as an expression of support to the principled efforts of the United Nations to put an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations in an effective, speedy and unconditional manner.

I commend the draft resolution to the Assembly.

**Mr. Lewis** (Antigua and Barbuda): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on the issue of the decolonization of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, a matter of particular interest to the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

As we come to the close of this penultimate year of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, declared by the General Assembly in its Resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, and its companion resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, which approved a plan of action for the period, it is useful to review the implementation of the provisions of the Decade as a way of gauging the success of this initiative and of determining the strategies for the international community in the years ahead. Unfortunately, the level of implementation of the plan of action of the Decade leaves a great deal to be desired. Major provisions have yet to be addressed. Priority actions, such as the creation of political education to heighten the awareness of the peoples of the Territories, as well as visits to each of the Territories by the Secretary-General or his special representative, have never materialized.

The two critical analyses to have been completed pursuant to the plan of action, on the constitutional, political and economic development of the Territories, have essentially been ignored. This is reportedly due to the unavailability of resources and necessary expertise to carry out this crucial exercise. It is important to recall that significant reductions in human and financial resources available to the Special Committee of 24 were made at the precise time when the provisions of the plan of action were to have begun to take effect.

In this connection, CARICOM reiterates its long-standing view that these studies and analyses called for in the plan of action are vital to a systematic and complete assessment on the part of the international community of the prevailing economic, political and social conditions in all of the Non-Self-Governing Territories as they progress towards a full measure of self-government. The importance of this comprehensive approach, based on the long-standing principles of political equality, remains

critical. Thus, while we regard as somewhat useful the strategy envisaged in the draft resolution on the implementation of the decolonization Declaration, calling for a case-by-case examination of one or two Territories arbitrarily selected, we do not consider this method in any way a substitute for the full examination of the remaining Territories that would be completed in the studies and analyses contained in the plan of action. These studies and other elements of the plan of action should be undertaken as a matter of urgency, and the resources required to do this work should be identified. Significantly higher levels of resources than what are required for these studies have historically been made available in furtherance of the self-determination process of other Territories. No less attention should be devoted to the small island Territories.

A cursory review of the political and constitutional development of the remaining — mostly small island — Non-Self-Governing Territories, makes it evident that none of them have met the essential criteria of full and absolute political equality, as defined by the General Assembly in its landmark resolutions. These principles of political equality must remain the operative standard to be applied to the self-determination process of the remaining small island Non-Self-Governing Territories. This is essential in order to avoid the inadvertent legitimization by the international community of unequal, politically dependent arrangements that still characterize the present political status of these Territories. It does not appear that full self-government in any of these Territories will be attained by the end of the year 2000.

Related to the unfinished critical activities of the plan of action is the slow pace of implementation of decolonization resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. Requested reports recommending the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination have not been adequately completed. Similarly, sufficient action has not been taken on other initiatives that were to have focused on political education, natural resource management, the preparation and conduct of political status referendums and other measures identified by the General Assembly and the peoples concerned as vital to the interests of the self-determination process.

While there has been remarkable success in decolonizing over 80 territories since the Second World War, it is clear that the job remains incomplete, and the attainment of full self-government through internationally recognized processes of self-determination remains the unfinished business of the United Nations. It is evident that the efforts made thus far in this decade with respect to the small island Territories has not been sufficient. Yet United Nations regional seminars on decolonization held in the CARICOM States of Grenada in 1992, in Trinidad and Tobago in 1995, in Antigua and Barbuda in 1997 and in Saint Lucia in 1999, along with similar sessions in Fiji and Papua New Guinea in the Pacific, have provided us with important recommendations from the peoples of the Territories themselves to accelerate the decolonization process. Had these suggestions been heeded, it is likely that a much more favourable picture could be presented today.

In order to regain the momentum necessary to address the self-determination needs and aspirations of the people of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, CARICOM, as part of its contribution to the Millennium Assembly, will propose a comprehensive plan of action for a second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. This will serve to complete the work left undone in the first such Decade, and to honour the political commitment enshrined in the United Nations Charter, to ensure the successful completion of decolonization of the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories. The recommendations of the regional seminars will be integrated into this new plan.

One positive development of this Decade has been the convening of a series of regional seminars, alternating between the Caribbean and Pacific. These seminars are designed to assess the situation from a regional perspective by hearing the widest possible views on the various political alternatives available to the Territories. We in the Caribbean are of the view that this regional approach remains the best way to ascertain the unique self-determination needs of the small island Territories, and we remain committed to this regional seminar format. The 1999 Caribbean Regional Seminar, held in Saint Lucia last May, was especially valuable for the insights which were gained from representatives of territorial governments and regional experts on the envisaged role of the United Nations in their decolonization process into the new century. We are pleased to note that the adoption of the Saint Lucia seminar report marked the first time since the seminars convened in 1990 that the recommendations were sent to the General Assembly for consideration.

The momentum generated by the Saint Lucia seminar was critical for the inclusion of updated language in the omnibus draft resolution on the small Territories under consideration today, and it has successfully moved

the process forward from previous years in which the General Assembly had repeatedly adopted virtually identical texts which did not take into account any new developments affecting the Territories. The draft resolution on the small Territories offers flexible and innovative solutions to addressing the decolonization issue, and our concentration should now be focused on finding effective means of implementing these recommendations. Similar new language in the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies also recognizes new developments, especially in the area of the participation of many of these Territories in the wider United Nations system. This should be equally encouraged.

CARICOM regards the issue of the self-determination of the Non-Self-Governing Territories as the unfinished business of the United Nations, requiring new and innovative solutions to enhance their political, economic and social development. Many countries have successfully emerged from an internationally recognized decolonization process through the attainment of those legitimate political status options which provide political equality. The international community cannot accept anything short of this goal for the remaining Territories simply because they may be small in size.

CARICOM has a special interest in the successful self-determination process of the small island Territories in the Caribbean and regards them as integral components of the economic, political and social fabric of our region. A successful process leading towards their self-determination is quite naturally one of our regional priorities. In this vein, CARICOM pledges its full support to efforts in furthering the successful emergence of these Territories to full political and constitutional maturity. But it is only with the full support of the international community that this process can be successfully and expeditiously completed.

**Mr. Dausá Céspedes** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The achievements of the United Nations in the sphere of decolonization have been significant since the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and peoples was adopted in 1960. Without a doubt, the decolonization process has been one of the greatest victories of the United Nations.

However, much remains to be done in the area of decolonization, and it would seem that we have lost the momentum of the 1960s and 1970s, when dozens of Territories under colonial rule achieved their independence. On the eve of the twenty-first century, the goal of a world without colonialism will have to wait a little longer.

The list of colonial Territories has remained unchanged for quite a few years. In a world in which it is claimed that we have moved from confrontation to cooperation, how can it be justified that there are still people suffering from the horrors of colonialism and there are still some administering Powers that continue to refuse to cooperate in the work of decolonizing undertaken by the United Nations and the bodies set up to that end?

Cuba deems unacceptable and discriminatory the arguments put forward by some that the size of a given Territory or the number of its inhabitants must be borne in mind when considering independence. The inalienable right to self-determination and independence for peoples under colonial rule must be respected by all, regardless of the size of a given Territory, its geographic location, the number of its inhabitants or the abundance of its natural resources.

The Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism is almost over, and the challenges in the decolonization process, far from having diminished, have grown and become more complex.

Despite the repeated appeals of the Special Committee and the General Assembly, some administering Powers still do not submit the required information on Territories under their control on time, as clearly stipulated in Article 73 of the Charter.

The case of the visiting missions is also well known. With some exceptions that we must acknowledge, the cooperation of some of the administering Powers is far from satisfactory. These missions, as has been emphasized on several occasions, are a wonderful opportunity for obtaining first-hand information on the real situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories have legitimate right to benefit from and to use their natural resources. In accordance with resolution 2621 (XXV), we call once again on the administering Powers to take the relevant legislative or administrative measures to put an end to activities of companies under their jurisdiction that irrationally exploit the natural resources of Territories they administer. Moreover, we reiterate our concern at the military activities carried out by some administering

Powers in Territories under their administration that run counter to the rights and interests of the people affected. The military bases and installations in the Non-Self-Governing Territories are a clear impediment to the enjoyment of the right to self-determination of peoples and must be eliminated. Similarly, we are strongly opposed to any attempt to use Non-Self-Governing territories for carrying out nuclear tests, stockpiling radioactive or toxic waste or housing weapons of mass destruction.

The limited development possibilities of Non-Self-Governing Territories call for ongoing cooperation and assistance from the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system. Despite the efforts of the United Nations Development Programme, resources continue to be insufficient and the coordination of the various institutions of the system is still not as effective as it could be.

It is unacceptable that some are still determined to deny the right to independence and claim that it is only the right to self-determination that matters, as if the right to self-determination could be taken separately from the exercise of independence. It is also unacceptable that some wish to distort the right to self-determination with new wording or simply by changing the names of Territories under their rule.

While it is promising that in recent months the administering Powers, in particular some that had not been doing so before, have maintained an informal dialogue with the Special Committee, we are concerned with the reluctance to consolidate this dialogue and to make it official.

Once again, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the independence and self-determination of the sister Republic of Puerto Rico, which has suffered under the yoke of colonialism for more than 100 years and yet has not lost one iota of its identity as a Latin American and Caribbean nation.

The colonial Power resorts to all kinds of manoeuvring to mislead international public opinion and to distort the economic, political and social reality of Puerto Rico. Yet there is only one truth: Puerto Rico is still denied its legitimate right to self-determination and its right to be a sovereign and independent nation.

The recent incidents in Vieques and the decisions taken by the United States Government regarding the United States military presence on the island leave not a shadow of a doubt. Despite the national consensus in Puerto Rico demanding the withdrawal of the military forces from Vieques, the colonial mandate has once again been exercised against the will of the Puerto Rican people.

While we cannot say that no progress has been achieved recently, unfortunately, the results are far from what we had hoped for and, most importantly, far from what the people living under colonial rule had hoped for: to be able to exercise their right to freedom, to sovereignty and to independence. The draft resolution before us, of which my delegation will vote in favour, attempts to reflect that desire and the hope that sooner rather than later the scourge of colonialism with all the ills it brings in its wake, will disappear from the world.

In closing, allow me to emphasize our conviction that the magnitude of the work that we have yet to do in the decolonization process should not lead us to inaction or pessimism. On the contrary, an objective, transparent and respectful exchange on our achievements, and especially on our difficulties, will be the first step towards a world without colonialism. In this task, as always, the Assembly can count on the full support of the delegation of Cuba.

**Mr. Naidu** (Fiji): I am pleased to announce on behalf of the following members of the South Pacific Forum — Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu — that they all support the draft resolution before the Assembly on this item.

All the countries of the South Pacific Forum, including Australia and New Zealand, have been colonies, possessions or territories of other nations. Accordingly, together we have a singular concern for the remaining Territories that have not exercised their right to self-determination in the Pacific subregion. Our concept of the right of self-determination is one that is based on the realities of survival in a world that nature has carved out and shaped for us. For many centuries, our ancestors have managed to survive the scourge of natural disasters, but have also benefited from the bounties of the ocean that surrounds us. Ours is an oceanic continent. While many members recognize substantial land resources as a means of survival, ours is very much dependent on the ocean.

The remaining five Territories in the Pacific are American Samoa, Guam, New Caledonia, Pitcairn and Tokelau. With the exception of New Caledonia, these are small islands in the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. The problems of these Territories are much the same as those recently discussed during the General Assembly's special session on small island developing States.

We in the Pacific are particularly concerned that the rights of the people in these Territories may be overshadowed by the global goals and aspirations of nations jostling for prominence and/or a foothold in the geopolitics of today. The concerns about what sort of political structure is best suited for the people of these Pacific territories can best be dealt with by taking into account the traditional systems of government that served these people for many thousands of years before the arrival of outsiders on the scene.

We do recognize, however, that there may be a need for change to introduce better and more efficient systems of government, new technology and better skills to manage the environment for the benefit of the people of those Territories. We believe that without the agreement and cooperation of all interested parties, the desired outcome cannot effectively be brought about. Accordingly, although many of our members have voted in favour of draft resolutions under this agenda item in the past, we have always been sceptical about the usefulness of discontent and lack of dialogue between some administering Powers, on the one hand, and the members of the Special Committee on Decolonization, on the other.

We have now noted that there is some progress, albeit informal, in the relations between the Special Committee and those administering Powers. This appears to be reflected in the text of the draft resolution introduced by the Chairman of the Special Committee, Ambassador Donigi of Papua New Guinea. We believe this is in part due to the untiring efforts of some members of the Special Committee to improve relations with the administering Powers and, in turn, to the efforts of some administering Powers to cooperate with the Committee. We commend those members and administering Powers, and especially the Chairman, for this slight glimmer of hope. We would therefore urge other administering Powers to cooperate fully with the Special Committee to develop a programme of work for each of the Territories.

It is acknowledged that all Non-Self-Governing Territories are at different stages of development. Some have gross domestic products that are higher than those of some Member States of the United Nations, while some others are very poor and underdeveloped. The process of developing a programme of work for each Territory recognizes the uniqueness of each one and is an appropriate way of dealing both with their developmental issues and their right to self-determination. We support this process because we believe that it is only through it that we can establish a framework for efficiency, accountability and good governance in this area of the work of the United Nations.

We note that the draft resolution mentions visiting missions. We believe that visiting missions should be considered only if they are absolutely necessary for the Committee to implement its mandate. We therefore urge both the administering Powers and the Special Committee to give serious consideration to the need for visiting missions during their consultation process towards developing a programme of work for each Territory concerned. If there is a need for the missions, then the programme of work should include a visiting mission as an activity in respect of that particular Territory. That activity can then be properly evaluated and funded at an appropriate time.

On New Caledonia, I wish to inform representatives that at the recent South Pacific Forum heads of Government meeting in the Republic of Palau, the heads of Government welcomed the signing of the Nouméa Accord between the two main political parties in New Caledonia — the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) and the Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (RPCR) — and the French Government in May 1998.

The leaders noted the report of the Forum ministerial committee, led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country, The Honourable Mr. Tupeni Baba — which visited New Caledonia from 23 to 27 August 1999, and expressed the Forum's appreciation to the Government of France and the Government of New Caledonia for facilitating the committee's visit.

The South Pacific Forum further reaffirmed its support for continuing contact with all committees in New Caledonia and its recognition of the rights of the people of New Caledonia to self-determination. In this regard, the leaders agreed to a continuing future monitoring role for the ministerial committee on New Caledonia during the implementation process of the Nouméa Accord, and encouraged the Government and all

parties in New Caledonia to continue to maintain their commitment in earnest in its implementation, in keeping with the intent and spirit of the Accord.

The South Pacific Forum also called on its members that are willing to do so to make available training awards for the Kanak people in their own training institutions.

We note that the provision on military activities and presence has been slightly changed from its tone in previous years. In the Pacific, the administering Powers have a military presence on Guam and New Caledonia. We in the Pacific have never considered their presence to be a threat to the peace, order and good government of the Territories concerned. We have acknowledged the rapid deployment of assistance from these two bases in the many natural disasters that have afflicted many of our small nations over the years. We have not noted, nor have we received, any evidence of the use of the military activities in those two Territories to suppress the basic freedoms of the people of those Territories. We will, however, be very displeased if any of the remaining military bases are used to suppress the rights of the people of those territories, including the right to self-determination. We therefore warmly welcome the change of attitude of the Special Committee with respect to the provision dealing with military activities.

I wish now to turn my attention to East Timor, which is still on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. On this subject much has been said in the Security Council and by our own ministers at the commencement of this year's General Assembly session, in September. Suffice it to say, however, that we thank the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Ambassador Marker, for their efforts towards the exercise of the right of the peoples of East Timor to self-determination.

*Mr. Li Hyong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The process in East Timor, however, could not have taken place without the cooperation and foresight of President Habibie and his then Government. We are now left with the aftermath of the ballot, which was cast in favour of independence. We thank Australia for its decisive action in helping to bring some semblance of order to East Timor and for its continued involvement. We commend New Zealand and the other countries of the region that have come forward to provide assistance in all aspects of the administration of the Territory. We note the substantial monetary contribution made to East Timor by two countries of our region, namely Australia and Japan.

We call on the international community to provide additional assistance to the people of East Timor to rebuild their lives and nation as soon as possible, and hope that it will do so. We welcome the appointment of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello as the United Nations administrator for East Timor, and we look forward to receiving annual reports from the administrator until such time as that Territory gains self-government and nationhood.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I should like to inform members that the General Assembly will take action on the two draft resolutions under agenda item 18 after all the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee have been considered.

**Reports of the Fourth Committee**

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda items 86 to 92, 93 and 18, 94 and 12, 95, 96, and 18.

I request the Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, Mr. Gualberto Rodríguez San Martín of Bolivia, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

**Mr. Rodríguez San Martín** (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the pleasure to introduce to the General Assembly, for its consideration and approval, the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

These reports refer to each of the 14 items allocated to the Fourth Committee by the General Assembly. They indicate the documents which were made available for its consideration, and they contain the texts of the various resolutions and decisions on which it took action.

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee considered the items on its agenda separately, with the exception of matters relating to the Non-Self-Governing Territories and related issues, on which it held one single general debate.

With regard to its programme of work, the Fourth Committee held a total of 24 meetings, five fewer than originally planned, which enabled it to comply with the recommendations referring to organization, cost-effectiveness and making more effective use of conference services.

As a result of its work, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted 27 draft resolutions and three draft decisions, of which 13 draft resolutions and two draft decisions were adopted by consensus.

The first report, submitted under item 86, "Effects of atomic radiation", is contained in document A/54/573. Bearing in mind the harmful effects which may be caused by certain levels of radiation on human beings and the environment, the Committee assessed the quality of work and the reports of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and its independent method of operation, which are making a significant contribution to achieving a secure radiological environment. In this context, it encouraged the Committee to continue with its work.

In this connection, I would like to inform the General Assembly that I have received a letter from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China informing me that it wishes to become a sponsor of the draft resolution. The Permanent Mission of Indonesia has also expressed the wish to become a sponsor. Furthermore, the Permanent Mission of Belarus has requested me to clarify a technical mistake in the report, namely that Belarus was omitted from the list of original sponsors of the draft resolution.

In this respect, the Fourth Committee adopted the draft resolution which appears in paragraph 7 of the report and recommends its adoption to the General Assembly.

The second report, relating to agenda 87, "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space", is contained in document A/54/574.

The Fourth Committee welcomed the outcome of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999, and it endorsed the practical benefits and potential offered in all areas of human activity by space technology, the peaceful application of which can contribute to increasing the quality of live and to sustainable economic and social development.

As part of its work, the Committee decided to establish an open-ended working group which, under the chairmanship of the delegation of India, formulated two draft resolutions. The Fourth Committee recommends both draft resolutions, contained in paragraph 13 of the report, to the General Assembly for adoption.

The third report, issued as document A/54/575, refers to agenda item 88, "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East".

The Fourth Committee took note of the fact that 8 December 1999 was the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 302 (IV), which established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In that context, it recognized the work UNRWA has been doing since then to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees, and it reiterated its concern at the persistent critical financial situation of the Agency.

On this subject, the Committee adopted seven draft resolutions on various aspects of the mandate of UNRWA, which appear in paragraph 22 of the report. The Fourth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it adopt these draft resolutions.

The fourth report, referring to agenda item 89, "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories", is contained in document A/54/576.

The Committee considered the report of the Special Committee concerning the protection and promotion of the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories. On this subject it adopted five draft resolutions, to be found in paragraph 17 of the report. The Fourth Committee recommends these draft resolutions to the General Assembly for adoption.

It should be noted that during the debate on items 88 and 89, the Fourth Committee welcomed the signing of the Sharm el-Sheik Memorandum between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization on 4 September 1999, which established a new climate of confidence that is conducive to future negotiations, thereby providing significant momentum to the Middle East peace process.

The fifth report, relating to agenda item 90, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of

peacekeeping operations in all their aspects", appears in document A/54/577. The Fourth Committee reiterated that peacekeeping operations are an essential instrument in the strengthening of international peace and security and that, because of the multidisciplinary nature of current operations, their mandates should be subject to responsible guidelines and revitalized approaches, on the basis of the purposes and principles proclaimed by the United Nations. Under this agenda item, the Committee adopted one draft resolution, which appears in paragraph 9 of the report, and recommends that the General Assembly adopt it.

The sixth report, submitted under item 91, entitled "Questions relating to information", is contained in document A/54/578. The Committee stressed the central role of public information, which helps to project a strengthened and renovated image of the United Nations and to promote proper understanding of its work. Furthermore, in the light of the rapid changes in telecommunications and the increased use of electronic technologies, it underscored the need to explore possibilities for cooperation in the spheres of information and communications so that their benefits can be shared by all the peoples of the planet.

On this subject, the Committee adopted two draft resolutions and one draft decision, which were submitted to it by the Committee on information in its report on the work of its twenty-first session. The draft resolutions are contained in paragraph 11 of the report and the draft decision in paragraph 12. The Fourth Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt both draft resolutions and the draft decision.

With regard to the items on Non-Self-Governing Territories and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, agenda items 18, 92, 93, 94 and 12, and 95, which were considered together, the General Assembly has before it several reports. The report on agenda item 92, entitled "Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations", is contained in document A/54/579. The draft resolution on this item appears in paragraph 8 of the report, and the Fourth Committee recommends it to the General Assembly for adoption.

The report relating to agenda items 93 and 18, entitled, respectively, "Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories" and "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", is contained in document A/54/580.

Under these two items, the Committee adopted one draft resolution and one draft decision. The Fourth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution and the draft decision, which are contained in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report, respectively.

With regard to agenda items 94 and 12, entitled, respectively, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations" and "Report of the Economic and Social Council", the report of the Fourth Committee is contained in document A/54/581. On these issues, the Committee adopted one draft resolution, which is contained in paragraph 8 of the report, and recommends it to the General Assembly for adoption.

The report relating to agenda item 95, entitled "Offers by Members States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories", has been issued under the symbol A/54/582. Paragraph 6 of that document contains the text of a draft resolution adopted by the Fourth Committee, which it recommends to the plenary General Assembly for adoption.

The report on agenda item 96, entitled "Question of East Timor", is contained in document A/54/583. In this connection, it should be noted that the General Assembly decided, on the recommendation of the General Committee, to consider this item directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that bodies and individuals having an interest in the question would be heard in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in conjunction with the consideration of the item in plenary meeting.

The report issued under item 18, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", appears in document A/54/584, which contains the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to specific Territories not covered by other agenda items.

In this context, the Committee adopted four draft resolutions, including a consolidated draft resolution

covering 11 Territories, and one draft decision. The draft resolutions are contained in paragraph 23 of the report, and the draft decision in paragraph 24. The Fourth Committee recommends the draft resolutions and the draft decision to the General Assembly for adoption.

With regard to the situation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and related issues, the Fourth Committee considered the degree of implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, bearing in mind the fact the year 2000 marks the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In this context, it recognized the important contribution of the United Nations to decolonization and reaffirmed its commitment to continue to take the necessary measures for the advent of a world free from colonialism in the twenty-first century.

I should like to stress the high level of cooperation prevailing in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, which enabled it to achieve satisfactory results and complete its work effectively and constructively. In particular, I should like to pay tribute to the work carried out by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Sotirios Zackheos of Cyprus, which made it possible for the Fourth Committee to consider in depth all the agenda items allocated to it by the General Assembly and to make rapid and efficient progress in its work. The Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Matia Mulumba Semakula Kiwanuka of Uganda, Mr. Yury Kazhura of Belarus and Mr. Carlos Morales of Spain, with whom I had the pleasure of working, also contributed to this success. I should also like to express my appreciation for the ability and human qualities of Mr. Mohammad Sattar, the Secretary of the Committee, and the dynamic and competent team from the Secretariat that assisted him. All of them helped organize the work of the Committee and ensured that its work was carried out in an atmosphere of genuine cordiality.

I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly for consideration and adoption the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) contained in the reports to which I have referred.

**The Acting President:** If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee which are before the Assembly today.

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) have been made in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that by paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified to the contrary in advance.

This means that where recorded votes were taken in the Committee, we will do the same. I should also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

**Agenda item 86**

**Effects of atomic radiation**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/573)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 54/66).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 86?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 87**

**International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/574)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 13 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*Draft resolution I was adopted* (resolution 54/67).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution II is entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) also adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*Draft resolution II was adopted* (resolution 54/68).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 87?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 88**

**United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/575)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the seven draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 22 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Assistance to Palestine refugees". A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland,

Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Israel

*Abstaining:*

Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

*Draft resolution I was adopted by 155 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions* (resolution 54/69).

**The Acting President:** We turn now to draft resolution II, entitled "Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*Draft resolution II was adopted* (resolution 54/70).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution III is entitled "Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities". A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Draft resolution III was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions* (resolution 54/71).

**The Acting President:** We turn next to draft resolution IV, entitled "Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire,

Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:
None

*Abstaining*:
Israel

*Draft resolution IV was adopted by 158 votes to none, with 1 abstention* (resolution 54/72).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution V is entitled "Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:
Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:
Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:
Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Draft resolution V was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with 1 abstention* (resolution 54/73).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Haiti informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

**The Acting President:** We come now to draft resolution VI entitled "Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Draft resolution VI was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions* (resolution 54/74).

**The Acting President:** We now turn to draft resolution VII entitled "University of Jerusalem 'Al-Quds' for Palestine refugees".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:
Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:
Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Draft resolution VII was adopted by 155 votes to 2, with 1 abstentions* (resolution 54/75).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 88?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda Item 89**

**Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/576)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the five draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 17 of its report (A/54/576). After all the votes have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their votes.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:
Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:
Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:
Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

*Draft resolution I was adopted by 84 votes to 2, with 67 abstentions* (resolution 54/76).

**The Acting President**: We turn now to draft resolution II, entitled, "Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the other Occupied territories".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:
Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan,

Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Draft resolution II was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with 1 abstention* (resolution 54/77).

**The Acting President:** Now we shall turn to draft resolution III, entitled "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel, United States of America, Micronesia (Federated States of)

*Abstaining*:

Marshall Islands, Swaziland, Uruguay

*Draft resolution III was adopted by 149 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions* (resolution 54/78).

**The Acting President**: We turn next to draft resolution IV, entitled "Israeli practices affecting the

human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Swaziland

*Draft resolution IV was adopted by 150 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions* (resolution 54/79).

**The Acting President**: We turn last to draft resolution V, entitled "The occupied Syrian Golan".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel

*Abstaining*:

Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Swaziland, United States of America, Uruguay

*Draft resolution V was adopted by 150 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions* (resolution 54/80).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 89?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 90**

**Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/577)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

The Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 54/81).

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 90.

**Agenda item 91**

**Questions relating to information**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/578)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A and B recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 11 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 12 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution A, entitled "Information in the service of humanity".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution A without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*Draft resolution A was adopted* (resolution 54/82 A).

**The Acting President:** We now turn to draft resolution B, entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution B without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*Draft resolution B was adopted* (resolution 54/82 B).

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision, entitled "Increase in the membership of the Committee on Information".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft decision was adopted.*

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 91?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 92**

**Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/579)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

None

*Abstaining*:

France, Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*The draft resolution was adopted by 155 votes to none, with 6 abstentions* (resolution 54/83).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 92?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 93 and agenda item 18** (*continued*)

**Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/580)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 11 of its report and the draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 12 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution, entitled, "Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self Governing Territories".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica,

Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Israel, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

France, Georgia, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

*The draft resolution was adopted by 153 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions* (resolution 54/84).

**The Acting President:** We now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan

*Abstaining*:

Micronesia (Federated States of)

*The draft decision was adopted by 99 votes to 53, with 1 abstention.*

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 93?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 18.

**Agenda items 94 and 12**

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**

**Report of the Economic and Social Council**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/581)**

**The Acting President:** I call on the representative of Argentina, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

**Mr. Estreme** (Argentina)(*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine Republic has always appreciated and strongly supported the work of the Special Decolonization Committee. Accordingly, my country has traditionally voted in favour of resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations because we agree with the objectives of those resolutions and because in earlier years the texts correctly reflected the various aspects of the issue of decolonization.

However, although there is no objection now to the draft resolution in general, my delegation believes that operative paragraphs 16 and 18 do not adequately consider the various resolutions in force in the framework of the Special Decolonization Committee, particularly the resolutions on specific Territories adopted by the Committee. It is important to my country that the decisions of the Committee of 24 and of the General Assembly be in full accordance with all resolutions on decolonization. Accordingly, my delegation will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/54/581.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The draft resolution is entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

None

*Abstaining*:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of

Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan

*The draft resolution was adopted by 101 votes to none, with 52 abstentions* (54/85).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Yemen informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 94?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** The Assembly has concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 12.

**Agenda item 95**

**Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/582)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 54/86).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 95?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 96**

**Question of East Timor**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/54/583)**

**The Acting President:** May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 96.

**Agenda item 18** (*continued*)

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

**Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)** (A/54/584)

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the four draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 23 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 24 of the same report.

We turn first to the four draft resolutions contained in paragraph 23 of the report.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Question of Western Sahara".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*Draft resolution I was adopted* (resolution 54/87).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution II is entitled "Question of New Caledonia".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*Draft resolution II was adopted* (resolution 54/88).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution III is entitled "Question of Tokelau".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*Draft resolution III was adopted* (resolution 54/89).

**The Acting President:** Draft resolution IV is entitled "Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted draft resolution IV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*Draft resolution IV was adopted* (resolution 54/90).

**The Acting President:** We turn now to the draft decision contained in paragraph 24 of the report.

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Question of Gibraltar", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*The draft decision was adopted.*

**The Acting President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 18.

The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

**Agenda item 18** *(continued)*

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**

**Draft resolutions (A/54/L.50, A/54/23 (Part III), chapter XIII, section G, para. 7)**

**The Acting President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/54/L.50 and the draft resolution contained in part III, chapter XIII, section G, paragraph 7 of the report of the Special Committee (A/54/23).

The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.50, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

Belgium, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Turkey

*Draft resolution A/54/L.50 was adopted by 141 votes to 2, with 14 abstentions (resolution 54/91).*

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Dissemination of information on decolonization", contained in Part III, chapter XIII, section G, paragraph 7 of the report of the Special Committee contained in document A/54/23.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against*:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining*:

France, Israel, Monaco

*The draft resolution was adopted by 149 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions* (resolution 54/92).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Costa Rica informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

**The Acting President:** I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolutions just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Ms. King** (United States of America): My delegation regrets that we once again had to vote against the draft resolution (A/54/L.50) on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. While we wish to state our deep appreciation for the improvements on the overall text of this year's resolution, my country remains troubled by elements of the text, particularly operative paragraph 12, addressing military activities and arrangements in the Territories. The United States notes that the military presences referred to in this paragraph can be extremely beneficial to multilateral efforts to support international peace and security. For example, our installations in Guam were highly instrumental in providing the initial United States naval response for the International Force, East Timor (INTERFET), and also served as an en route support location for United States aircraft, as well as foreign forces, dedicated to that multinational Force.

I wish to underscore my country's appreciation for the work of the Chairman of the Committee of 24, Mr. Peter Donigi of Papua New Guinea. We commend him for his efforts to engage the administering Powers on the decolonization issue. The United States remains committed to the process of dialogue, based upon the established guidelines of July 1999, which exists between the Committee of 24 and the interested parties. We appreciate the spirit of cooperative engagement and the

positive working atmosphere which have characterized this year's debate on the decolonization issue. My country hopes that this productive atmosphere inspired by Chairman Donigi will remain, as we, together with the Committee of 24 and other interested parties, continue our examination of the situation within the Territories.

**Mr. Eldon** (United Kingdom): I should like to take the floor in explanation of the United Kingdom's votes on the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/54/L.50) and the draft resolution on the dissemination of information on decolonization (A/54/23 Part III, chapter XIII, sect. G, para. 7).

With regard to the second resolution, the United Kingdom remains of the view that the obligation which this text places on the Secretariat to publicize decolonization issues represents a wholly unwarranted drain on the United Nations scarce resources. The resolution is therefore unacceptable to us.

On the resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Kingdom welcomes the amendments that have been made to the text this year, both those initiated by the drafters and those made following negotiations with the European Union. We applaud the drafters' flexible approach and are grateful for the efforts made by Ambassador Donigi and his colleagues to address some of the European Union's concerns on the text. We welcome in particular the recognition given in the text to the progress made in the ongoing informal dialogue between the Committee of 24 and the administering Powers, and we would like to pay a warm tribute to Ambassador Donigi's leadership in this regard.

Unfortunately, a few elements of this text continue to cause the United Kingdom difficulties and forced us to vote against the draft resolution on this subject again this year. These include, but are not limited to, operative paragraph 12, which calls on the administering Powers to eliminate the remaining military bases in the non-self-governing territories. This language is drawn from the decision on military activities, which we also voted against this year, and its inclusion in the general resolution is accordingly unacceptable to us.

My delegation hopes that the sponsors of this text will build on the improvements made this year in such a way as to allow us to reconsider our position in the future. Meanwhile, I would like to put on record once again the United Kingdom delegation's sincere intention to continue to participate, in a constructive and cooperative spirit, in the process of informal dialogue on decolonization issues with the Committee of 24 in the coming year.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 18?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*

United Nations A/54/PV.72

# General Assembly

Fifty-fourth session

*Official Records*

72nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 7 December 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

*President:* Mr. Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 24**

**Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/54/436)**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.47)**

**The President:** As the General Assembly begins its consideration of agenda item 24, I wish to say a few words on the subject, for this is an issue on which I have spoken many times over the years and intend to continue doing so.

Members will recall that in my acceptance speech before this body, on 14 September 1999, I stated that the horrors of slavery and destruction wrought upon Africa and its peoples could not be forgotten. Then I emphasized that the time was opportune for reconciliation and healing. I also pointed out that such an act of mutual affirmation would, however, never be complete unless Africa's sacred relics, icons, artworks and other priceless cultural objects were returned lock, stock and barrel to the rightful owners.

Moreover, I expressed Africa's corporate sadness and anguish in seeing that today these stolen African treasures adorn public museums, libraries, art galleries and private homes in foreign lands, and I insisted that they must come home to assuage the pain and anger in the hearts of succeeding generations of Africans. For me, it is a moral problem of heart and soul and of conscience.

What I stated then about the return of priceless African art and icons is equally applicable to the cultural treasures illegally exported from other countries throughout the centuries. It is time to return them home. The lapse of time has not in anyway whatsoever diminished the weight of ownership or the quest for justice and restitution.

The report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, annexed to document A/54/436, which is before the Assembly this morning, describes the actions taken by the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation. This report is a testimony to the efforts that are being made worldwide for the return of all cultural and artistic treasures. It also cites measures being undertaken to establish a code of ethics for dealers in cultural property, to establish international standards for recording minimal data on movable cultural property, to set up data banks of stolen cultural property in order to assist in the tracing and return of cultural and archaeological objects, and to sensitize civil society, and specifically the young, to protect their environment and cultural heritage.

These are all efforts that I wholeheartedly endorse. We all know only too well that the cultural objects of a people play an integral role in defining their identity,

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personality and forms of self-expression. It is my intention to help keep this campaign alive and contribute to its success, for the return not only of African cultural objects but also of all other precious treasures illegally removed from their countries of origin. Using the bully pulpit to further justice and the restoration of cultural property is no vice.

We should strive to make the next millennium one of peace, tolerance, fairness and restitution. This means leaving behind this sad history and its consequences.

I now give the floor to the representative of Greece to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.47.

**Mr. Gounaris** (Greece): It is an honour for me to take the floor in order to introduce to the plenary Assembly a draft resolution on the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin, submitted for the first time by Greece, under agenda item 24.

Draft resolutions like the one we are presenting today, without reference to a Main Committee, have been before the General Assembly for many years and reflect concerns that are shared by a vast number of Member States of the United Nations.

The return of cultural property to its countries of origin or its restitution in case of illicit appropriation is an issue depicted in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/54/436. It is an issue that is methodically promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the Director-General of UNESCO for their efforts and ask that they continue their endeavours. In this context, I would also like to express our appreciation to the 22 member States of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation for their valuable recommendations adopted this year in Paris, under the chairmanship of Canada, during the tenth session of the Committee.

The increasing support and interest expressed on this agenda item by a vast number of Member States, both from the developing and developed worlds, have strong and deep roots. This biannual draft resolution, which is based on the texts of previous resolutions on the same subject, refers to several Conventions, *inter alia*, Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, adopted at The Hague on 14 May 1954, as well as the Second Protocol to the Convention, just recently opened for signature, also at The Hague, on 26 March 1999.

Last year, the Unidroit Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, adopted in Rome on 24 June 1995, entered into force, underlining the need for the widening of international cooperation on this issue, the voluntary restitution of cultural property to its countries of origin, the increasing use of international databases and the importance of protecting our underwater cultural heritage and dealing effectively with the looting of shipwrecks.

Given that raising public awareness is essential for combating the illicit trafficking in cultural property, this year's draft resolution introduces, in full compliance with existing working methods of the United Nations, a new element: the electronic transmission of information concerning stolen cultural property and the linking of existing databases and identification systems on this issue.

Greece, being the repository of a cultural heritage that now belongs to all mankind, firmly believes that cultural objects are a treasure to be freely cherished and enjoyed by all nations. However, future generations throughout the world, having recovered from past traumas, need to fully appraise and value their cultural heritage and be given the opportunity to see it exhibited at its own birthplace, as a matter of respect for its origin.

In this context, the continuous cooperation between Member States, the transparency of information and the open exchange of views between parties concerned are all essential elements in addressing and, hopefully, achieving a satisfactory solution to the issue of the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

I hope that this year's draft resolution continues the momentum already shown by the relevant Conventions for the protection of cultural property.

On behalf of my Government, I would like to thank those Member States that, as of today, have sponsored the draft resolution contained in document A/54/L.47, and to extend our sincerest appreciation for their support. In fact, I have just been informed that the following countries will also sponsor the draft resolution: Algeria, Peru, China and the Marshall Islands.

I hope that consultations on the text of the draft resolution, which are still under way among the delegations concerned, will successfully conclude with a consensus text, to be adopted in the coming days by the plenary General Assembly.

**Mr. Šimonović** (Croatia): The issue of return or restitution of cultural property to countries that are victims of appropriation involves, undoubtedly, many a thorny and complex question. These difficulties, however, should not deter the concerted efforts by the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations to continue to work in coordination with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), within their mandates and in cooperation with Member States, to resolve this important matter.

For Croatia — whose cultural heritage has emerged and survived at a millennial crossroads of different cultural currents — this issue is of particular importance. In this context, Croatia is best described as a diverse borderline country, both lodged in the heart of Central Europe and spread along the Mediterranean coast of the Adriatic Sea. Given such a geographical location, Croatia has always been faithful to its complex heritage and yet extremely open to new influences from abroad. Due to its location as well as rich heritage, Croatia has often, even in present times, been devastated by foreign conquests on the frontiers of past empires or civilizations.

This is why, shortly after its independence, Croatia acceded to international instruments for the protection of historical monuments and cultural heritage, such as the landmark Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954. Unfortunately, this in itself has not protected us from wanton destruction and pillage of our monuments and cultural artifacts. By way of illustration, it has been established by independent foreign reports that more cultural artifacts were destroyed during the first seven months of war in Croatia than during the entire duration of the Second World War in the former Yugoslavia. Out of 204 museums, galleries and collections in Croatia, 66 museum buildings were destroyed, while 45 museums and galleries suffered either theft, damage or devastation. More precisely, 6,551 artifacts disappeared, 1,430 were destroyed and 728 were damaged.

Croatia is particularly sensitive to the issue of the return of cultural property taken from Vukovar and the Dubrovnik area. The artifacts taken from the City Museum of Vukovar, the famous Bauer Collection, the Memorial Collection of the Nobel Laureate Ružička, the Historical Museum, various private collections and the Catholic Church in Vukovar have been well documented by the fact-finding missions of the Council of Europe, UNESCO and others.

For the reasons just described, Croatia commends UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation on their tireless efforts to promote bilateral negotiations for the return or restitution of cultural property.

Despite our sour experiences, we do not wish to overlook the fact that significant advances have been made, particularly during the latter half of this century. Hence, we wish to reaffirm the importance of the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention, as well as the role played by the International Council of Museums during armed conflict. At the same time, it is clear that, in both international and internal armed conflicts, adherence to and implementation of the Hague Convention are either partial or impossible. The immense destruction of cultural property that was witnessed by the world during armed conflicts and wars in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Croatia, amongst others, demonstrated best the urgent need to improve the 1954 Convention.

Accordingly, my country welcomed the Second Protocol as an important development and was one of 20 signatory countries involved in the process of revising the Hague Convention during regular meetings convened by UNESCO. Croatia views the Second Protocol as a comprehensive improvement to the original text of the 1954 Convention. The Second Protocol goes further to develop the Convention's protective powers with regard to military involvement and the need to strengthen the system of protection for those categories of cultural property deemed of vital importance to mankind or whose exceptional cultural and historical value is recognized by national legislation. It also contains a series of new mechanisms reflecting the actual situation of war damage. It is hoped that the latter shall simplify and shorten the existing and often lengthy process of obtaining adequate response from and, ultimately, the requisite protection of the relevant bodies and organizations.

The entry into force of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) Convention

on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects is welcomed by my delegation, whose hope is that its new important provisions will fulfil our expectations in further enhancing and strengthening existing protective mechanisms to date. With the celebration next year of the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, signed in Paris in November 1970, it is time to revisit the notion of an international strategy for combating such crimes.

The means to achieve this must, however, be reviewed in the context of evolving challenges. Cooperation between Member States, in collaboration with UNESCO and other international organizations, must be further developed, taking on board all possibilities for realizing the attainment of the objectives of the body of international norms in this field.

At the national level, my delegation supports the initiative encouraging Member States to draw up, in cooperation with UNESCO, systematic inventories of their cultural property. Furthermore, the efforts of UNESCO to link existing databases and identification systems to allow for electronic transmission of information concerning stolen cultural property, including those removed from areas of conflict and occupied territories, is viewed by my delegation as a primary weapon in the ongoing struggle to achieve an advantage over those engaged in the smuggling trade. The possible adoption of an international professional code of ethics for dealers in cultural objects would certainly be conducive to regulating, to a certain extent, the illicit yet very lucrative trading of cultural property into private collections.

The protection and preservation of each country's cultural heritage, and in particular making young people aware of the value of our respective heritages, allows us to acquire a deeper insight into our common historical destiny. This in turn helps us to predict and better understand historical developments throughout the world, as well as to act more humanely in regard to them, than has been the case so far in our world. My delegation is encouraged by the ongoing consultations on the draft resolution on return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin and is of the view that it encompasses the requisite political will for the promotion of the return or restitution of cultural property. Therefore, the onus falls upon us, the international community, to show real commitment that will enable us to take significant steps towards ensuring that the threat of the extinction of our respective cultural heritage never becomes a reality.

Finally, Sir, allow me to commend you for your personal commitment to this issue, which will surely add impetus to the efforts to address the complex problem of the return or restitution of cultural property.

**Mr. Krokhmal** (Ukraine): I would like to start this statement on the question of return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin by recalling that the historical and cultural heritage of each State is recognized as a basic element of the culture and identity of peoples. Indeed, we know from our own experience how great are the losses inflicted on a whole range of generations by the illegal expatriation of cultural property from its original location.

Ukraine attaches great significance to finding practical solutions to the persisting and complex problems that hinder the restitution of stolen or illicitly removed cultural property to the countries of origin. Numerous valuable pieces of our cultural property have been removed from the territory of Ukraine and dispersed throughout the world, thus becoming inaccessible to my country and withdrawn from its scientific and cultural life. The development of statehood and the increased level of historical and national consciousness of the Ukrainian people urgently require the assessment of the actual amount of losses in historical monuments, works of art and religious and cultural relics.

Our country is developing international cooperation both at bilateral and multilateral levels and is ready to start an open and constructive dialogue with all interested parties in this respect.

In this matter, we proceed from the understanding that the return of cultural property to the country of origin is a delicate problem politically, legally and ethically. That is why we are prepared to address every individual case appropriately and carefully, with due regard for the conditions under which a masterpiece was relocated from our country.

We believe that the solution to these problems should be based only on international law. Our country actively participates in the elaboration of rules governing the restitution of cultural property and supports the initiatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property

to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation.

In our view, convening a special session of the Committee to consider the problem of the restitution of cultural property illicitly taken from the countries of origin during and following the Second World War would be extremely important. Ukraine has ratified a number of international instruments, including the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Furthermore, Ukraine will soon become a party to the recently adopted Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention. We are convinced that this important legal instrument will become a solid foundation for the protection of cultural treasures for future generations.

We should also like to emphasize the need to bring restitution relations into line with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the decisions and initiatives put forward by many international organizations, including UNESCO and the Council of Europe, and by the Governments of the Member States.

In this context, my delegation notes with appreciation the report of Secretary-General submitted in cooperation with the Director-General of UNESCO. The report provides a helpful account of the work done by UNESCO in promoting bilateral negotiations for the return or restitution of cultural property as a matter of cultural continuity and justice, of the preparation of inventories of movable cultural property and of the dissemination of information to the public in this field. At the same time, we share the view that the role of UNESCO and other relevant organizations in this regard should be strengthened.

We also believe there is a need to establish, under the auspices of UNESCO, a special fund for promoting the restitution of cultural property. In our view, UNESCO could also contribute to the establishment of an international cultural order and initiate a fruitful dialogue between nations in terms of a global culture of peace.

Ukraine considers that the coordinated international approach towards the problem of returning cultural property to the countries of origin and the reduction of the effects of its illicit trafficking should become a significant component of the global cultural strategy. Every piece of cultural and historical heritage contains a universal message for mankind and, at the same time, an individual message for the citizens of a particular State or representatives of a particular nation.

Members may recall that at the fifty-second session of the General Assembly Ukraine put forward an initiative to proclaim an international year for the preservation, protection and restitution of cultural property. We did so with a sense of concern and urgency, with a view to reaffirming our commitment to working together in reviewing and removing the fundamental constraints to achieving progress in this critical area. Ukraine has been at the forefront of efforts to find a solution to the persistent and complex problems related to the return and restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin. We shall continue to seek ways to provide for this.

**Mr. Zackheos** (Cyprus): The issue of the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin constitutes an area in which international relations are put to a noble test to ensure that cooperation among State and non-State actors can effect change in the right direction in a wider area on which there is consensus at the international level — that of the absolute need to protect the cultural heritage of mankind.

My delegation attaches particular importance to this issue and to the efforts of the United Nations in general — and UNESCO in particular — for the considerable work that has been done in this direction. In this respect, we welcome the Secretary-General's report and the nine recommendations contained in the report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the action taken by the Organization for the return and restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

Since our last discussion on this item in this body, a major development has taken place. The entry into force of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects on 1 July 1998, a development which we warmly welcome, has added yet another important tool to our common efforts to protect the cultural heritage of the planet.

Cyprus, as a State party to the Hague Convention of 1954 and a signatory of its Second Protocol, adopted earlier this year, also follows with interest the work undertaken in the preparation of a Draft Convention on the protection of the underwater cultural heritage and expresses its support for efforts in this direction.

Cyprus notes the decision of the British Museum to organize an international conference on the cleaning and conservation of the Parthenon marbles and welcomes the draft resolution submitted by the European Parliament for the return of the Parthenon marbles to their natural home, the Acropolis of Athens, well before the year 2004, when the Olympic Games are to be held in that city.

We believe that the Parthenon marbles constitute a special case in the issue of the restitution of cultural property. They are not simply another item whose legal ownership is contested; they present a unique case. They are an integral part of a major monument of civilization that has survived for more than two and a half millennia. We believe that the efforts for their return to Greece should be intensified and that such a development would contribute to the spirit of cooperation between two friendly countries whose bonds of friendship run very deep.

Combating illicit trafficking in cultural property is a task that requires perseverance and multifaceted efforts. One of the major areas in this context is the exchange of information and the compiling of inventories. Cyprus supports all efforts in this respect, including the establishment of an on-line network by UNESCO that will include the widest possible inventory of cultural artefacts that have been stolen from their legal owners, including those removed illegally from areas of conflict and occupied territories.

Another area of cooperation which has to be expanded is that of the collaboration between police forces, museum staff and customs officers. Cyprus welcomes the efforts of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) in promulgating this cooperation and the protocol established between UNESCO and the World Customs Organization, as well as the agreement between UNESCO and the development by the latter of a database containing 14,000 objects.

At the national level, Cyprus welcomes the adoption of several codes of ethics relating to the acquisition of property by many museums in industrialized countries, along the lines set by the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the International Council of Museums Professional Code of Ethics. We consider it important that, as we prepare to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the landmark 1970 Convention next year, an international code of ethics will come into being, further establishing the code that should regulate trading in cultural objects.

My country's 9,000 years of recorded civilization have left us with an immense cultural heritage that we have an obligation to protect and to bequeath to future generations. By virtue of Cyprus's geographical position at the crossroads of three continents and many civilizations, its cultural heritage has been continually enriched through the millennia and provides insight into the many civilizations that have existed on the island during its long and colourful history. Many of the artefacts of this rich cultural heritage can be viewed in museums throughout the world.

There are many more that have become objects of illicit traffic, especially those removed illegally from the territory of the island currently outside the Government's control. The plundering of the cultural heritage of Cyprus in this area has been so widespread that it led to a decision by the United States, a decision which we warmly welcome, to impose an emergency import restriction in April of this year on Byzantine ecclesiastical and ritual ethnological material from Cyprus, unless such material is accompanied by an export permit issued by the Government of Cyprus.

Our determination to investigate the fate and to pursue the return of every object of our cultural heritage removed illegally from Cyprus to its legal owners is unshakable. In this effort, we look to the international community to extend its support.

**Mr. Amer** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Cultural properties assume an extremely important priority among peoples' and nations' interests. The cultural heritage is part of peoples' histories; it is a symbol of their time-honoured traditions and a reflection of their civilizations. For this reason, our discussion of the item assumes extreme importance.

This is a new campaign against States and individuals so that they will return stolen carvings, manuscripts and works of art to their original countries. At this session, we note from the report contained in document A/54/436 that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is attaching increased importance to the question of cultural property. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the achievements of UNESCO and the efforts made by its Director- General. I would like to mention in particular the interest it allotted to increased international awareness of cultural property and to assistance offered for recovering and returning such property to their original countries.

Libya, like many other countries, has been subject to widespread attempts to steal its cultural property throughout the past five centuries. The circumstances imposed by the colonialists on the Libyan people opened the way to an orchestrated campaign of theft against some of the most important and time-honoured elements of Libyan culture. Visitors to famous museums, research centres and palaces in Asia, Europe and the United States have come to know first-hand the valuable contribution of creative Libyan individuals to various art forms and their sophisticated taste in such forms. The colonialists have already dissipated most of this work and its history.

Suffice it to say that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century over 165 artifacts were stolen from the Shahat archaeological site in eastern Libya. Hundreds of pieces of clay pottery, a record of the history of that city, were stolen. Thousands of gold and bronze coins of different sizes were smuggled out of that same city. Historical sources affirm that in 1860 alone, dozens of huge columns and fascinating colonnades were transferred from Leptis Magna, in western Libya, to Great Britain, where they were used to decorate one of the King's gardens. The same sources confirm that one European stole 350 marble columns and thousands of small artefacts from the same city. Another European stole over 600 prehistoric artefacts from Benghazi; these are currently displayed in a famous European museum.

The United Nations, through UNESCO, has tried to assist in the return and restitution of works of art, manuscripts and other artefacts to their original countries. However, as clarified in the Secretary-General's report, progress in this field has remained limited despite the repeated attempts that began over 25 years ago. It is a cause of concern that the majority of States that own such treasures have not had the will or made any serious attempt or taken any practical measures to implement the General Assembly's resolutions on this item.

It must be recalled that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was one of the countries behind the initiative to include this item on the General Assembly's agenda, because we attach great importance to the subject of returning cultural property to its country of origin. Moreover, most countries that have cultural property belonging to others have refused up to now to adhere to the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This exposes the intentions of those who claim to be the leaders of modern civilization and the caretakers of human heritage. It shows that their thoughts still belong to a period that consecrated the stealing of property and cultural heritage of others. Libya is an ancient country with a great cultural history and has been subject to plundering of its works of art; therefore, we insist on recovering our artefacts, our manuscripts, our jewellery and our works of art.

In this regard, I would like to mention that we have reached important agreements with the Government of Italy. At the meeting of the joint Italian-Libyan commission held in August of this year, Italy agreed to return the famous Venus Virgin to Libya. It has also agreed to conduct a survey to find all the historical artefacts or Libyan manuscripts in Italian universities, museums or other centres, and to start returning this property to Libya.

We highly value this positive response on the part of the Italian Government and hope that other Governments will follow suit and will return to us some of our cultural and artistic property that was flagrantly stolen. Any kind of stalling or obstruction of attempts to return this property and to implement the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, including resolution 3148 (XXVIII), will force us to resort to all available means to recover our property. We cannot remain silent as long as our cultural artefacts are lost regardless of for how long or for how many years. They are rightfully ours, they are a symbol and representation of our culture and identity, and our future generations will insist on recovering them.

**Mr. Kim Chang Guk** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin, contained in document A/54/436, submitted in association with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The cultural property of each country and nation is a priceless national cultural heritage formed through a long history with national wisdom, talent and cultural tradition. Cultural property is a treasured wealth making it possible to hand down and inherit national tradition and spirit through generations. It should therefore be duly preserved in the territory or country of origin.

The preservation and protection of cultural property is a fundamental right of each country and nation. Countries and nations of the world preserve and take care of their own cultural property as a national treasure.

However, many developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which experienced the colonial rule of foreign forces in the past, have lost numerous items of cultural property as a result of looting and destruction by colonialists, and have faced serious problems in the continuation of national tradition and the systemic development of national culture.

My country, which was under the military occupation and colonial rule of Japan for over half a century in the early twentieth century, is not an exception.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Assembly to the communiqué of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations, contained in document A/54/179, concerning the plunder and destruction by Japan of Korean cultural property in the past.

Great efforts have been made by developing countries to regain national cultural property pillaged in the past. Since 1973 the General Assembly has been considering the issue of return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin as a matter of great importance, reflecting the just demand on the part of developing countries. Up to now, a number of resolutions have been adopted urging the countries responsible for the plunder and destruction of the cultural property of other countries to return or restitute illegally possessed property to the countries of origin.

The question of preservation and protection of cultural property has only recently become a subject of discussion by the international community. The international community has paid close attention to the protection of national cultural property and established concrete norms of international law in the area of preserving the cultural property of nations through relevant international treaties and conventions.

The Hague Convention concerning Laws and Customs of War on Land, adopted in 1907, provides the principles for the protection of cultural property in occupied territories during time of war. The 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property stipulates as illicit the compulsory transfer of ownership of cultural property arising directly or indirectly out of occupation by a foreign Power.

There is ever-increasing international awareness on the importance and urgency of the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin through the activities of the relevant organizations, including the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation. This promotes the legal rights of countries to regain their pillaged cultural property.

It is commendable that the United Nations, UNESCO and other relevant organizations have made great efforts to facilitate the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

The international community demands that the countries responsible for the illicit plunder and destruction of cultural property during their occupation of, or colonial rule over, other nations should return or restitute such property to the countries of origin. That is an inescapable international obligation of those countries that plundered and destroyed other nations' cultural properties in the past.

The resolutions regarding the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin adopted in the General Assembly on many occasions are far from being implemented satisfactorily. This is related to the fact that certain countries continue to intentionally turn their backs on the return of cultural property plundered by illicit means in the past to the countries of origin.

In this connection, my delegation wishes to underline the fact that Japan, *inter alia*, has neither returned nor restituted numerous items of cultural property it pillaged and destroyed by barbarous means in the past. Still worse, it even refuses to consider or recognize its responsibility for the illegality of its past wrongdoing.

Such an attitude on the part of Japan remains a challenge to the aspirations of the Korean people to restore their national cultural heritage and to the demand of the international community as reflected in the resolutions of the General Assembly on the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

My delegation is of the view that countries which acquired cultural property of other nations by illegal means in the past, like Japan, should demonstrate their will to return or restore them in conformity with the will and demand of the international community, through, among other things, their sincere attitude regarding the consideration of the item under consideration.

It is regrettable that we have to enter the twenty-first century with unresolved problems of the twentieth. The United Nations, UNESCO and other relevant organizations are expected to play a more active role in resolving such problems as the return or restitution of illegally transferred cultural property to the countries of origin. My delegation hopes that at its current session the General Assembly will make a substantive contribution to the settlement of this important and urgent matter by seeking and adopting practical measures to facilitate the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin at an early date.

**Mr. Ouch** (Cambodia) (*spoke in French*): We are meeting here today to consider for the seventeenth time since 1973, the very important question of the return or restitution of cultural property to the country of origin. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/54/436, which contains the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), concisely sets forth all the work done and the activities conducted by both the international organizations concerned and the members of our Organization to promote the return or restitution of cultural property to the country of origin. The report describes the measures taken by UNESCO to follow up the recommendations adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation at its ninth and tenth sessions, held successively in September 1996 and January 1999, in order to achieve the objectives of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

Although progress has been made, my delegation believes that much remains to be done. This in no way means that we should not pay tribute to the Secretary-General and to the Director-General of UNESCO for their tireless efforts in this regard. We would also like to express our gratitude for the efforts by a number of international organizations, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the Customs Cooperation Council.

In its desire to make its modest contribution to these noble activities, the Kingdom of Cambodia is prepared to host the eleventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee, which is to be held in the year 2001.

The plundering of and illicit trafficking in works of art and archaeological treasures is one of the most serious problems we have experienced since the beginning of the twentieth century in countries with an ancient civilization like the Kingdom of Cambodia. These inhuman and immoral activities have been conducted on a large scale over the last few years, in spite of international efforts aimed at ending this phenomenon. No country has been spared. According to Interpol, in the year 1997 alone there were 2,476 documented thefts of works of art in Germany, 2,944 in Russia, 2,244 in the Czech Republic and 5,569 in France. In Italy, the customs police recorded over 30,000 thefts of works of art in 1996. In the Kingdom of Cambodia, over 100 twelfth-century Khmer sculptures were stolen in the month of January 1999 alone from the Banteay Chamr temple in the north of the country.

The main threats of damage to and destruction of works of art of Khmer culture are worsening daily. For over 20 years now, monuments that are part of the Angkor archaeological site — which extends over more than 200 square kilometres and is comprised mostly of isolated ruins buried under vegetation — have been the principal targets of thieves and traffickers in stolen works of art and antiques, a phenomenon that has attained dramatic proportions. Because of the systematic plundering of our archaeological sites, many of our cultural treasures have been taken away and illegally acquired by museums and collectors in many countries. This tendency has been encouraged by the fact that demand remains high and collectors are ready to pay vast sums to get hold of examples of Khmer art.

Of course, the development of comprehensive safeguarding operations, which involve a permanent presence at many monuments at our archaeological sites, will make it possible to ensure better protection against plundering. Many measures have already been taken, both practically and in terms of regulations, in cooperation with Interpol and ICOM to combat these practices.

Every people has its own culture and civilization and has created its own values that are dear to it and which express its genius. The cultural heritage of a country is an integral part of its life and an expression of its national and historic identity. It is for this reason that the ongoing illicit trafficking in and the systematic plundering of its works of art are harmful not only to the countries that own these works of art and archaeological treasures, but also to universal culture and human civilization. It

can lead to a deliberate falsification of history, which is why artistic and archaeological treasures must be returned to their historic sites — whatever the reasons for the transfer of these cultural properties from their countries of origin in the past to wherever they may now be — so that the world can recover its true historic characteristics. Restitution is a human, noble and moral act that strengthens international cooperation in other fields and represents a positive factor in relations between States.

The Kingdom of Cambodia, as a signatory to the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and faithful to its commitments under these Conventions, fully intends to recover its cultural property stolen and fraudulently exported overseas.

My Government very much appreciates the activities of UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Committee, which have made a significant contribution over the years to the strengthening of international cooperation through negotiations and multilateral and bilateral agreements.

We would also like to express our great appreciation to ICOM for drawing up detailed inventories of hundreds of stolen cultural objects, which have contributed to the restitution of some of those objects. For instance, in March 1997 the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art returned a head of Shiva at a ceremony at Phnom Penh. On that occasion the curator of the Museum also returned to Cambodian authorities a second object that had previously been in the possession of a private collector who, as a result of this campaign, decided to return it through the Metropolitan Museum.

In December 1996, a London art dealer went to Cambodia to restore officially to my Government a stolen head that she had obtained from another dealer. In May 1997, in Zurich, a bust of Uma was returned to the Cambodian authorities by a New York museum. On 19 November last, the Thai authorities handed back to my Government more than 120 historic artifacts plundered from Khmer temples and seized in Thailand.

The Kingdom of Cambodia, a least developed country with limited resources, is helpless to protect these sites and prevent thefts and vandalism. It is indebted, therefore, to those persons and institutions that have made, and continue to make, contributions to the return and protection of our cultural heritage.

My delegation reaffirms its strong conviction that it is necessary to strengthen and extend every possible form of cooperation among all countries within the framework of mutual respect, respect for international law and the relevant international conventions, in order to ensure, at the international level, the protection and restoration of archaeological, historical and cultural treasures.

We hope that international efforts will bear fruit and that the restoration of cultural properties to their legitimate owners will be encouraged, so that our various cultural heritages, which not only have historical and ancestral value but which also represent the intellectual and moral heritage of future generations, can be preserved.

It is in this spirit that my delegation wishes to express, on behalf of the King of Cambodia, His Majesty Norodom Sihanouk, a man of great culture, and Her Majesty Queen Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, as well as on behalf of the people and Government of Cambodia, their profound gratitude to the Government of the United States of America for its decision last week to impose urgent restrictions on the import of cultural property from Cambodia. This decision is a noble, humane, moral and exemplary act.

My country is a sponsor of draft resolution A/54/L.47, which is before us. We hope it will represent a historic landmark in the application of the Convention on the protection of cultural property and that it will be adopted by consensus.

**Mr. Al-Humaimidi** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly's consideration today of the item on "Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin" reflects the importance that the international community attaches to the humanistic dimensions of the cultural property of peoples as their principal contribution to human civilization as we know it today.

It also reflects the international community's recognition of the need to restore cultural property to the countries of origin, because its fundamental value lies in its presence at its sites of origin and because of the civilizational and historical implications that such sites bear. Removing such property from its original site deprives the countries affected of fundamental spiritual and cultural components of their heritage. It further deprives humankind of identifying a great segment of its history.

In addition, the restitution and return of artifacts, sacred relics, works of art and other civilizational treasures to their countries of origin will strengthen international cooperation in preserving and developing cultural values. This was stated in the Convention concerning the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, adopted in Paris in 1970.

Iraq has contributed effectively to the building of human civilization for more than 7,000 years. The first agricultural village was established there, the nucleus of the state and civil society took shape in it, during the Sumerian kingdoms in 4000 BCE, and humankind learned to write there. On its land, the first laws appeared and humankind took its first steps in all the arts and sciences. The cultural role of Iraq has continued throughout the ages, and Baghdad, the capital of the Abbassids, was a beacon of civilization for all the world.

This rich history made Iraq a repository of civilizational treasures. All parts of Iraq, north and south, contributed to the history of the civilization that emerged and developed therein and bore fruit for the whole of humankind. For this reason, Iraq has become a prime victim of antique thievery by those forces that colonized it as well as those that are eager to add its archaeological artifacts to their museums.

Because of the continued organized plunder of Iraq's archaeological artifacts, foreign museums and galleries are packed with these antiques, as are the special collections retained by art traffickers and professional collectors.

The military aggression in 1991 and the comprehensive sanctions on Iraq have led to a further draining of Iraq's cultural heritage. On the one hand, the aerial bombing led to the partial or total destruction of many cultural landmarks such as mosques, churches and archaeological sites. A case in point was the bombing by British and American jets of an archaeological site in the historic city of Ur. That city witnessed the birth of the father of prophets, Abraham. This left huge craters 10 metres wide and four metres deep. One of the fighter jets made more than 400 holes in one side of the wall of that site. The American soldiers used their bayonets to dislodge antiques. This left many holes in the wall. Many holes were also made in the walls of another archaeological site in Ur.

On the other hand, the continued sanctions and external interference in the internal affairs of Iraq have led to illicit excavations and to the continued smuggling of cultural artifacts, rare works of art, manuscripts and other relics. The methods used to smuggle such artworks constitute a crime against the heritage of humanity. Smugglers and art thieves do not hesitate to break archeological works of art into small pieces so they can easily smuggle them across the borders. Daily aerial bombardments against Iraq in the illicit, so-called no-fly zones are destroying many archaeological sites, including churches and mosques.

Iraq has tried its best, through recourse to international organizations and by means of bilateral contacts, to ensure the restitution to Iraq of manuscripts and artworks that are being held in European States and whose owners have confessed to have been smuggled from Iraq. Despite the numerous international conventions that stress the right of States to the restitution of their cultural property and that prevent illicit trafficking in such property, many of the States that have acquired such works refuse to accede to those conventions and do not respond to bilateral negotiations for the restoration of such antiquities to their countries of origin. The international community and its institutions should exercise their legal and ethical role to force those who have stolen antiquities, States as well as individuals, to restore them to their countries of origin.

Iraq appreciates the efforts made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to increase international public awareness of this problem. At the same time, we call for an improvement in the current international conventions so as to protect international cultural heritage and provide technical assistance to those States that are suffering from serious problems related to illicit trafficking in their cultural artefacts. We hope that the United Nations, through its specialized agencies, will continue to raise the awareness of the international community of the irreparable damage inflicted upon the cultural heritage of certain States, that are the victims of continued destruction and plunder. Such damage constitutes a major cultural loss for the world and for humanity as a whole, now and for generations to come.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I should like to inform Members that, at the request of the sponsors, action on draft resolution A/54/L.47 will be taken at a later date, to be announced.

**Agenda item 101**

**Operational activities for development**

**(a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system: follow-up to the World Summit for Children**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.51)**

**The President:** Members will recall that at its 33rd plenary meeting, on 11 October 1999, the General Assembly decided to consider directly in plenary meeting sub-item (a), entitled "Operational activities for development of the United Nations system", of agenda item 101, Operational activities for development, which had been allocated to the Second Committee on the understanding that only the topic entitled "Follow-up to the World Summit for Children" would be considered in plenary meeting.

In this connection, the Assembly has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/54/L.51, entitled "Special session of the General Assembly for the follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001".

I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.51.

**Mr. Haque** (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001". First of all, I should like to inform the Assembly that, since the publication of the most recent draft, a number of additional countries have joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. In addition to the 102 countries listed in the draft resolution, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Brazil, Eritrea, Gabon, India, Israel, Madagascar, Monaco, Senegal, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and the United Arab Emirates have joined as sponsors. This brings the total number of sponsors to 116. I would also like to announce that the name of the United States was inadvertently included in the list of sponsors; the United States is not sponsoring the draft resolution.

Ten years ago, the heads of State or Government of Canada, Egypt, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan and Sweden issued a call for the holding of a summit to consider, at the highest political level, the situation of the children of the world. The idea received overwhelming support from the international community. Leaders and high-level representatives from more than 150 countries gathered at the World Summit for Children, held on 30 September 1990. The Summit heralded the bringing of issues relating to children to the forefront of the consciousness of humanity.

The Summit agreed on a number of ambitious global goals for the 1990s. These included reduction of the infant mortality and under-five child mortality by one third and of maternal mortality by half, cutting down by 50 per cent the number of children under five suffering from malnutrition, enabling every child to attend primary school, immunizing 90 percent of the world's infants and protecting children in especially difficult circumstances, particularly in situations of armed conflict.

The Plan of Action adopted by the Summit placed the interests of children at the centre of the development endeavours of the international community. It stipulated that the specific and quantifiable goals enumerated in the Plan should be achieved by the year 2000. The adoption of the Plan mobilized the nations of the world to address the problems being faced by children, and parts of the Plan were made an essential element of the development programmes of a vast majority of countries. A comprehensive mid-term review held in 1996 indicated that many countries had made significant progress towards the achievement of the targets established for the protection, development and welfare of children.

I would be remiss, however, if I did not note that the near-universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child contributed greatly towards the realization of these goals. Similarly, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has played an important role in advancing the cause of children by promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has always played a sterling role in promoting the welfare of the children of the world. We deeply appreciate the support of UNICEF in the follow-up to the World Summit for Children, especially its help to Member States in the preparation and implementation of their national plans of action. Other agencies and organizations have also made a significant contribution in promoting the well-being of children. We express our deep appreciation to them as well for their commitment and devotion to the welfare of children.

Progress has been made, but much remains to be done. One of the major challenges facing us today is to

eliminate the significant disparities in the conditions and quality of life available to children of different regions of the world. The pace of progress in this respect has been painfully slow in some regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and in South Asia, which together account for three fourths of all deaths of children under the age of five. There has also been limited progress towards the goals established for better nutrition, reduced maternal mortality, basic education and education for the girl child.

Most countries of the world have made extraordinary efforts over the last decade to meet the targets established at the Summit. Their inability to fully achieve the desired results has been for reasons beyond their control and has been due primarily to the lack of necessary resources. The close link between the progress made on issues relating to children and the gains made in the achievement of overall goals of development has also become apparent during the past decade. We believe that these two goals complement each other and must be pursued in tandem.

It is also generally conceded that, because of their heavy debt burden, the developing countries have not been able to allocate sufficient resources to achieve the goals and objectives of the Summit. The large and ever increasing debt burden and debt servicing of the developing countries have had an adverse impact on the achievement of the goals set at the Summit. Without the alleviation of the debt burden, there is little likelihood that national policies can be fully implemented or the goals of the Summit achieved any time soon. Large-scale debt relief and debt cancellation would release resources to launch a war against poverty and to direct much-needed resources to the problems being faced by children.

The success of the Summit must, however, not be assessed on the basis of the achievement or otherwise of its goals. The impact of the Summit has indeed been profound. It created a new understanding of the problems faced by the children of the world and prepared the ground for new partnerships between Governments, non-governmental organizations and international agencies in pursuit of a shared and noble objective. The international community must build on the momentum generated by the Summit, and efforts must be redoubled to ensure that all children benefit from the commitments made by world leaders at the Summit.

In order to give a new and strong impetus to the realization of the goals of the World Summit for Children, the sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.51 have proposed the holding of a special session of the General Assembly in 2001, at the highest level, to conduct a 10-year review of the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted at the Summit. The special session would be preceded by a number of events at the national, regional and international levels.

The draft resolution being submitted to this body by more than 115 sponsors emphasizes the need for a renewed commitment to the agreed targets and to setting the agenda and time-frame for future action for the welfare of children. We are confident that the entire international community will lend its full support to the preparatory process leading to the holding of the special session of the General Assembly.

More than 120 million children are added to the global population every year. Unfortunately, most of these new arrivals are born into poor families. The situation of a vast majority of children is therefore worse now than ever before. The international community must recommit itself to the goals of the World Summit for Children and undertake the necessary initiatives to improve the lives of the hundreds of millions of children growing up in extreme poverty. In a world awash with resources, it is unconscionable that so many children are suffering so grievously. This body must issue a clarion call that the present situation is unacceptable and will not be allowed to continue. We owe this to our children.

I commend draft resolution A/54/L.51 to the General Assembly for adoption.

**Mr. Ka** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The World Summit for Children, held at New York in 1990 and attended by the head of State of Senegal, His Excellency President Abdou Diouf, was an unprecedented historic meeting. It was historic in terms of the calibre and high level of the participants. It was historic also in terms of its results.

Two years later, the International Conference on Assistance to African Children was held at Dakar, Senegal, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Moreover, July 1990 had seen the adoption of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

The World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child continue to be the basis for

our countries' national policies with regard to the protection and promotion of the rights of the child.

The World Summit for Children thus adopted the seven objectives to be met during the decade 1990-2000: to reduce the mortality rate for infants and children under five by one third; to reduce the maternal mortality rate by one half; to reduce the malnutrition rate among children under five by one half; universal access to safe drinking water; universal access to basic education; and helping children in difficult circumstances, particularly in situations of armed conflict.

The world Plan of Action called upon donor countries and developing countries to give high priority in their budgets to the welfare of children, particularly in the framework of the 20/20 Initiative. My country, Senegal, has striven to implement the objectives through its National Plan of Action for Children, adopted in July 1991, less than a year after the Summit. This Plan targets such varied areas as the economy, health, water, sanitation, advocacy, information and legal questions.

Furthermore, these areas have all been taken into account in the various programmes of the operational plan linking the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to the State of Senegal. Thus, my Government has established, in cooperation with UNICEF, a number of programmes and projects, including a Children, Youth and Women's Programme; a project to set up community child-care centres for early childhood development; a Child and Youth Culture Programme, which involves setting up libraries and support programmes for Koran schools and for working children; advocacy programmes for children; and support programmes for non-governmental organizations, associations and other groups working for children.

Our National Plan of Action set the following priority objectives: an 80 per cent increase in vaccinations of six antigens under the expanded vaccination programme; elimination of neonatal tetanus; reduction of measles mortality by 95 per cent and morbidity rate by 90 per cent; virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency; universal iodization of salt; combating diarrhoea infection by oral rehydration to 80 per cent; eradication of guinea worm by holding councils of war chaired by the head of State; increase in overall school attendance from 58 to 60 per cent, for girls' attendance to 42 per cent; providing 61 per cent of the population with access to safe drinking water and increasing water purification to 46 per cent; and improving living and schooling conditions for 20,000 pupils in Koran schools.

Holding parliamentary sessions with speakers from the Children's Parliament has done a great deal to contribute to a better awareness of the specific needs of children and to the wide dissemination of the rights of children. This is true also of the special events on children, including the Children's Gala presided over each year by the head of State; the Day of the African Child, celebrated each year on 16 June; and the Week of the Child.

Through national anti-poverty programmes and community nutrition programmes, my Government, with the support of UNICEF, the World Bank and other development partners, has made significant progress in the area of the protection and promotion of the rights of the child.

Particularly with regard with child workers, it is my pleasure to stress that my country, Senegal, has ratified the principal conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), including its Convention 5 on the minimum age in industry, Convention 6 on child labour, Convention 10 on the minimum age in agriculture, Convention 29 on forced labour, Convention 33 on the minimum age in non-industrial work and Convention 81 on work inspection.

In 1997, Senegal adopted a new labour code, raising the minimum working age from 14 to 15. The programme of cooperation between the Government of Senegal and UNICEF for 1997-2001 is under way, and a support project for child workers and street children is planned. Furthermore, the National Assembly and the Senate of Senegal have just authorized the President of the Republic to ratify ILO Convention 182, adopted on 17 June 1999, concerning the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

I would like to add that my country also ratified in 1998 the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; and, in February 1999, it ratified the Statute of the International Criminal Court. On 31 January 1999, a law was passed penalizing female circumcision, paedophilia, rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment.

Within the framework of its National Economic and Social Orientation Plan and sectoral plans, my Government is working hard to create a favourable

environment for equality of opportunity between the sexes and the elimination of disparities between the sexes in the field of education. We are happy today that in Senegal the school attendance rate for girls is progressing at a faster rate, 8.6 per cent, than it is for boys, 6.1 per cent. My Government considers reducing child and infant mortality an absolute priority, as well as reducing the synthetic measure of fertility by, in particular, stepping up its efforts in family planning, functional literacy for women and school attendance for girls. Furthermore, we support the efforts of UNICEF, other organizations in the United Nations system and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and Armed Conflict on children. My country also favours the raising to 18 the minimum age for recruitment into the armed forces and welcomes the preparation by UNICEF of an agenda for peace and security for children.

It is in a context of major difficulties and with the burden of constraints inherent in the implementation of structural adjustment programmes that our developing countries have committed themselves to the application of the results of the World Summit for Children. As the Assembly knows, the 1990s have been particularly hard for Africa and the least advanced countries. They saw official development assistance go down exponentially. The exorbitant rate of debt, the low rate of foreign direct investment, the many different obstacles to access to the world market for our exports, the constraints imposed by our membership in the World Trade Organization and the unexpected and undesirable effects of globalization — all those and many other factors, including armed conflicts, humanitarian crises and the spread of HIV/AIDS have had a negative effect on the implementation of the world Plan of Action and national plans of action for children.

Even if it is established that primary responsibility for the implementation of existing international commitments belongs to national Governments, it is important to stress the irreplaceable role of the United Nations and of the whole international community in the mobilization of resources and support for the national efforts of poor and deprived countries.

My country, Senegal, hopes that the national evaluations and the regional conferences to be held in preparation for the special session of September 2001 will give us a better understanding of the obstacles that have been encountered in the implementation of the results of the World Summit for children, so that the best ways and means of and new initiatives for accelerating the implementation of the commitments can be identified.

The world forum for education scheduled to take place in April 2000 in my country will be an important stage in the evaluation of the educational situation throughout the world. It will lay particular stress on the challenges that must be confronted in order to realize the objective of education for all and universal schooling.

It is therefore our hope that the special session of the General Assembly in September 2001 will give the international community an opportunity to renew its commitment to children, by the adoption of a new action-oriented world plan.

**Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): One objective proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations is the saving of succeeding generations. This is to say that the future of children, of our children, is of utmost concern to the international community and we are all implicated in their plight. Guided by this concern, the United Nations decided to devote particular attention to children by convening the World Summit for Children 10 years ago, in 1990.

Like so many others who are aware of what is at stake, my country, Burkina Faso, took part in these meetings, which laid the foundation for greater understanding and better management of the problems of children.

What have been the results? That is the objective of the meeting in 2001: to assess the results of the World Summit, 10 years after it was held.

We know that in this area national experiences should guide international action. Therefore I would like to very succinctly outline a few of the initiatives that my country has undertaken within the framework of the follow-up to the World Summit.

First, on the political level, let me emphasize that Burkina Faso has signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, since 1995 it has been a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

On the institutional level, in addition to the general measures that have already been implemented and that were contained in the initial report, my country has also adopted other measures. These include the establishment of a mechanism — the national committee to follow-up on and assess the national plan of action for children — which is entrusted with coordinating the follow-up and

with evaluating all actions undertaken to promote children and their flourishing; and the establishment of a national committee to combat drugs, in view of the real danger that this scourge presents for children.

On the judicial level, a penal code has been adopted that identifies new infractions in order to enhance the protection of the basic interests of children. These infractions concern, in particular, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and paedophilia, which are now severely sanctioned by the law.

However, all of these efforts to create a safer environment for children and to follow up efficiently presuppose the resolution of several difficult issues, including the thorny issue of infant health.

Unfortunately it must be recognized that in Burkina Faso, as in most African countries, the health situation of children, which is intimately linked to that of their mothers, has not changed much since 1994. This is primarily due to certain endemic illnesses, such as meningitis and malaria. It is also due to malnutrition and, in general, our weak purchasing power. This explains the high rates of infant and child mortality. In 1995 the Government adopted a plan for risk-free motherhood, in order to lower the rate of infant and maternal mortality.

In addition, as regards hygiene and health, the level of consumption of potable water remains insufficient, despite the efforts of public services to better meet the needs. The situation is also far from satisfactory in the field of sanitation.

To this rather sombre backdrop we must of course add the negative affects of AIDS. AIDS and HIV are a public health problem in Burkina Faso, where the rate of infection is estimated to be 7 per cent. An ever-more-significant number of children are AIDS orphans. Thus, in order to address the problem, the Government has set up a national committee to combat AIDS. This committee's strategy gives priority to providing information, education and communication about health matters, in particular to groups of young people and women.

Finally, despite the difficult economic context, the availability of education has increased in Burkina Faso. The number of schools has increased from 2,971 in 1994 to 3,568 in 1997. Over the same period, the overall rate of school attendance has grown from 33.9 per cent to 37 per cent, and the proportion of the students who are girls has also increased. Our objective is to ensure an overall school attendance rate of 60 per cent by the year 2005, including 50 per cent attendance by girls, and a 40 per cent increase in the literacy rate.

Without a doubt, in the 10 years since the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit much important progress has been achieved. However, much remains to be done, in particular in developing countries where poverty persists. This is why we firmly support and co-sponsored draft resolution A/54/L.51, which calls for the holding, in September 2001, of a special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children, in order to reassess the achievements, to make new commitments to help children and to consider activities to be carried out over the next decade.

We are all committed to making this special session a success. From this perspective, we wish to appeal to those States that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child so that it will have universal effect.

The future of our world will be in the hands of our children. Let us make sure that we make worthy and responsible people.

**Mr. Kolby** (Norway): 1990 was a momentous year for children's rights. On 2 September that year, the Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force. Later that same month, the leaders of the world gathered at the United Nations to attend the World Summit for Children. The year produced a series of promises, commitments, goals and rights for children. A decade later, the time has come to take stock of how many of those promises and commitments have resulted in concrete improvements for children and to redouble our efforts to achieve further progress.

Much has been achieved for children during the past 10 years. The most noteworthy accomplishment is the growing global awareness and acceptance of the fact that children have rights. Children are no longer viewed merely as recipients of welfare. They are individuals with the rights to survival; to development, including the right to relevant quality education; to protection from abuse and neglect; and to participation in the processes that affect them. This is true for every single child born anywhere in the world. Member States have committed themselves to making sure that children's rights are promoted and protected by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Despite the progress achieved during the past decade, it should be clear by now that reaching the goals for the year 2000 will be a very difficult task. There are many factors that have contributed to this slow progress. The global economic crises, the debt burden of many developing countries, the decrease in official development assistance, the increase in conflicts and instability and the spread of HIV/AIDS are all factors that have caused resources to be diverted from children. In addition, a lack of political will, a lack of necessary capacity and a lack of coordination among the relevant players have also been contributing factors.

This is not the time, however, to be overcome by pessimism. This is the time for analyzing the past decade for lessons learned and best practices and for renewing and deepening our commitment to realizing the World Summit goals. World leaders must again take a stand, but they cannot do this alone. Civil society, the international community and, of course, children must all be willing to work together. In this context, we must all renew our commitment to poverty eradication.

Norway will, together with other partners, contribute to ensuring a successful outcome of the special session of the General Assembly in 2001, which will review and appraise the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. This includes participating in assessments of the goals, analyzing results, raising awareness and commitment, mobilizing resources and building capacity.

However, the special session should not be a time just for looking back. It is even more important to look ahead. We must develop strategies which facilitate the full achievement of the existing goals, as well as the attainment of new goals within priority areas. All partners must play an active role in this process in order to ensure its success.

**Mr. Tchoulkov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The decisions of the 1990 World Summit for Children play a fundamental guiding role for the Russian Federation's activities on behalf of its children. That is why my country is interested in the convening of the special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit for Children.

In recent years, Russia has implemented fundamental changes in the system of protection of the rights of children in the light of new socio-economic realities. The medium-term state strategy for improving the status of children to the year 2000 was formulated in a national plan of action for children, approved by a decree of the President. The adoption in 1998 of a federal law on the fundamental guaranties of the rights of the child in the Russian Federation ensured the legislative determination of the goals of state policy on children and the basic guidelines for ensuring the rights of the child in Russia.

Consistent efforts have made it possible to reverse negative trends and substantially to reduce infant mortality and the mortality of children under five. The system for child immunization has been revitalized. The implementation of a federal programme targeting handicapped children and similar regional programmes have helped us to prevent childhood disabilities. The federal law on the fundamentals of compulsory social insurance, adopted this summer, provides the legislative guarantee of the right of children to treatment and health improvement in sanatoriums and resorts at the expense of social insurance funds, which are crucial to funding children's for summer recreation and health-improvement activities.

At the same time, we are aware that the problems of the transition phase of socio-economic reform transition from a planned to a market economy can affect children in the most painful ways. This results in family problems, orphanhood, homelessness among children, juvenile delinquency and the economic and sexual exploitation of children.

We clearly see the unresolved problems, their magnitude and complexity. That is why we expect the special session of the General Assembly to review the progress achieved over the past decade, including lessons learned, and to analyze the major factors impeding this progress. We hope that it will assess the remaining problems and key issues, formulate specific recommendations for the future and determine the strategy of the international community for the next decade.

It is with deep regret that the Russian delegation notes that, in spite of our insistent requests, the initiators of draft resolution A/54/L.51, submitted under the item under discussion today, failed to ensure the transparency and openness of the consultations on this draft. My delegation learned about the existence of this draft literally on the eve of its submission to the Secretariat for publication. Although we were not involved in the process of discussion of this draft, we were ready, in the spirit of goodwill, to discuss our concerns with the sponsors. We submitted our amendments to the draft to

its initiators and proposed the convening of open-ended consultations to discuss them and the draft in general. We must note that our request, regrettably, was ignored and that our concerns are not reflected in draft resolution A/54/L.51.

The amendments we suggested were not merely editorial, nor did they reflect only our national priorities. Some of them were related to a number of substantive questions, which, unfortunately, have remained unanswered. Specifically, we did not receive adequate clarification on the holding of two sessions of the preparatory committee in the year 2000 and of further meetings in 2001.

A decision was taken in resolution 51/186 to hold a special session of the General Assembly in 2001 and to defer consideration of its preparations to the fifty-third session of General Assembly. Resolution 53/193 further deferred the consideration of this question to the fifty-fourth session. We understand that this discussion is going on right now. In accordance with the established practice, after the general debate delegations usually have the time and opportunity to calmly study and evaluate the proposals put forward. Today, it appears we will not have that opportunity.

The Russian Federation attaches the highest importance to the implementation of the decisions of the World Summit for Children. This is precisely why we want a meaningful discussion of the draft resolution. But we were denied that opportunity. The suggestions presented by us to the sponsors were not taken into account in the text, and we did not receive any answers to many of the questions we asked.

Of course, our delegation will not oppose the adoption of this resolution, if the Assembly desires to adopt it. However, we wish to express our deep disappointment at the fact that the discussion of this most important issue was held in a non-transparent manner and in contravention of established United Nations practices and traditions regarding such discussions. In our view, this does not contribute to a good start of the preparatory process and does not add universality to the participation in and preparation of the special session.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this sub-item. Before proceeding to take action on draft resolution A/54/L.51, I should like to announce that since its introduction the following countries have become sponsors: Cameroon, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.51. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 54/93).

**The President:** I call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Ortique** (United States of America): My delegation would like to underscore the high importance that the United States places on enhancing and protecting the rights of all children throughout the world. We look forward to participating actively in the preparatory committee in the years 2000 and 2001. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of the World Declaration and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children. The World Summit for Children itself will be a valuable opportunity to reinvigorate our collective efforts on behalf of the world's children.

The United States delegation would also like to take this opportunity to stress our interpretation of the third preambular paragraph. We interpret this paragraph as an indication of the support by many nations for the basic principles underlying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and we are joining consensus on this resolution. The United States will continue to work with other nations to support the rights and the well-being of the world's children.

**The President:** The representative of Costa Rica has requested the floor on a point of order.

**Mrs. Castro de Barrish** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is not exactly a point of order, but a small statement.

Costa Rica is an enthusiastic sponsor of draft resolution A/54/L.51, which we have just adopted, regarding the special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children. We note that paragraph 12 invites the Committee on the Rights of the Child to provide its inputs to the preparatory process and at the special session. Costa Rica considers that if the Committee on the Rights of the Child had 18 experts, and

not just 10, its input and cooperation could be much more effective and valuable.

For that reason, I have requested the floor to very cordially and respectfully urge States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to respond to the communication addressed to them by the Secretary-General pursuant to article 50 of the Convention with regard to amending article 43, paragraph 2, with the aim of increasing the membership of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to 18, so that the amendment can enter into force.

That amendment was adopted without a vote at the Conference of States Parties to the Convention, convened by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Convention and held on 12 December 1995. Subsequently, on 21 December 1995 the General Assembly also approved the amendment without a vote in its resolution 50/155.

The Convention has a number of ratifications that makes it almost universal. Two thirds of the States parties, or 126, need to respond positively for the amendment to enter into force. However, only 64 responses have been received. My delegation would be very grateful if the States parties could respond positively to the Secretary-General, as they already have at the Conference of States Parties and at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, so that the amendment can enter into force at the beginning of the new millennium.

**The President:** We have heard the only speaker in the explanation of vote after the vote, as well as the information and explanation just provided by the delegation of Costa Rica.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 101.

**Agenda item 31**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/54/484)**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.38)**

**The President:** I call on the representative of Algeria to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.38.

**Mr. Baali** (Algeria)(*spoke in French*): As representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), it is my privilege to speak in this debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. My country, like all of Africa, clearly attaches particular interest to this cooperation, which in recent years has seen continuous development and which now embraces many fields of action of the two organizations, whether in the maintenance of peace and conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance or economic and social development.

Indeed, this cooperation today transcends the narrow framework of institutional collaboration between two intergovernmental organizations, and it is constantly on the increase in order to better adapt itself to the many challenges facing the pan-African organization and its member States and in order to contribute more resolutely to managing the aspirations of Africa while taking into account both the recrudescence and resurgence of a series of problems in the continent and the effects of the irresistible march of globalization, which affects all fields of human activity and is leaving its mark on current and future international relations.

In his address to the General Assembly on behalf of the Organization of African Unity on 20 September 1999, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika mentioned the challenges presented by the architecture of the world today. He asked who is better placed than the United Nations system to provide momentum for meeting challenges, to find solutions to problems and to offer remedies for disputes? Who is better placed than the United Nations family to come up with new forms of cooperation with States and intergovernmental organizations such as the OAU? Who is better able than the United Nations to give shape to the idea of the solidarity of affluent nations with those that are suffering from indebtedness and economic and social backwardness?

Imbued with the strength of these convictions, and convinced of the primary role that the United Nations must play both in remedying established orders and in promoting the ideals of peace, development and international solidarity, African leaders, at the recent Algiers summit, renewed their commitment to this cooperation and their faith in its contribution to the strengthening of peace and stability in Africa and its role as a driving force in the mobilization of the international community for the development of the continent.

In his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU, the Secretary-General has presented — and we thank him for this — a comprehensive picture of the work done over the last year, whether by the Secretariat itself or the various United Nations programmes and agencies. The report describes a series of cooperative actions taken with the OAU, which has inspired the thoughts I would like to share with the Assembly.

First of all, in this regard, our most important task is cooperation in conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace. The year 1999 has seen close cooperation gradually developing between the secretariats of the two organizations, with a view to circumscribing conflicts in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and between Ethiopia and Eritrea; in the latter case, consultation at the highest level has led to in the United Nations contribution to the formulation of technical arrangements designed to facilitate the implementation of the OAU Framework Agreement on the conflict between those two countries. More recently, the United Nations gave assistance to the Joint Military Commission created under the Lusaka Agreement for the restoration of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; this took the form of the seconding of military and civilian personnel and logistical support.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay a hearty tribute, on behalf of Africa, to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, as well as to his Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Bernard Miyet, for their constant and tireless efforts to ensure the consistent commitment of the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to hasten the deployment of military observers in advance of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in that country.

The two organizations should also, in what might be the first action of this kind, deploy a joint mission within the framework of the implementation of a peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Similarly, the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, now considered an essential tool for dealing with questions of peace and security in the continent, should be able to count on the support of the competent services of the United Nations, whether in developing its early warning capacity or its operational resources in general.

It was from this standpoint that early this year the Department of Peacekeeping Operations began to give thought to the establishment of a working group on the strengthening of peacekeeping capacities in Africa. Designed to coordinate and channel international cooperation with African countries in this sensitive area, that body, once it is created — and the sooner the better — will consolidate the channels of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU and will play a primary role in exchanges of expert information, training and financial and logistic support. Last August the African countries, for their part, transmitted to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, through me, their views and comments on the mandate that should be given to that working group.

However, in spite of certain encouraging signs that have emerged recently, we cannot fail to express our concern at the lack of enthusiasm — and sometimes even lack of interest — regarding Africa, especially when it comes to effectively supporting the peace efforts undertaken on the continent. From this standpoint, the many unfortunate events that occurred before the adoption of the last Security Council resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo seemed to abundantly reveal the indifference and selectivity from which Africa suffers in comparison with other parts of the world where the Security Council displays more diligence and initiative.

Various forms of cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations, including its various organs, agencies and programmes, should, in our view, effectively and regularly take shape in the field, as a clear expression of the provisions of the United Nations Charter and a constantly reiterated international will. This is particularly true with regard to the maintenance of peace and security in the world, which is within the scope and competence of the Security Council and which requires particularly sizeable logistic and financial resources far beyond the scant resources the African economies are in a position to provide.

Africa, however, is determined to assume its share of responsibility in this important endeavour in which the members of the OAU and the international community should commit themselves with faith and determination in order to meet the challenges of the moment and of the future. From this standpoint, the thirty-fifth summit of the OAU, held in Algiers, was a renewal of the commitment of African States to overcome their differences, resolve their conflicts and devote themselves to the only fight worth waging — the fight for development.

The Algiers Declaration adopted at the end of that last summit of the millennium is evidence of Africa's will for rehabilitation and of Africans' ambitions for their continent and their continental organization.

The other dimension of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU on which I would like to dwell briefly relates to cooperation in socio-economic development. Many activities have been undertaken in this area over the past year by the programmes and agencies of the United Nations, and these have been highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General.

We would like to note in this regard the efforts of the African countries in the fight against poverty, economic reform and the creation of favourable conditions for the recovery of their economies. In the context of rampant globalization, these efforts are, however, handicapped by the unfavourable situation in which the majority of African countries now find themselves, the scope of the new sacrifices required by the new facts of the world economy and the vicissitudes of international cooperation in development.

It is paradoxical indeed that in a continent where we find the majority of the least advanced countries and where two of every five people live in a state of absolute poverty, indicators of international contributions for development continue in a downward trend. This is the case, for example, with official development assistance which, according to United Nations statistics, between 1992 and 1997, went down from $19 billion to less than $16 billion, at the very time when the economies of the developed countries have never been in better shape.

Africa's share of foreign direct investment was estimated in 1998 at $5 billion, or 3 per cent of the total world volume, and its participation in world trade flows is simply insignificant. Considerable financial resources, instead of being devoted by African countries to development projects, are every year being used for the payment of the African debt, which at present exceeds $350 billion, or three times the combined value of the exports of all African countries.

This shows the importance of the social and economic recovery of Africa, to which the United Nations system could make an essential contribution. It also shows the priority Africa and the OAU attach to this sphere of cooperation with the United Nations system. In this regard, I should like to highlight the principal role played by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in a number of African countries and to point out that, in spite of the steady decline in UNDP's resources, it has continued to make Africa its principal area of action and the fight against poverty its priority.

In this regard, even if we must admit that the necessary adaptation of UNDP to the realities of the day should enable it to find more effective means of achieving its objectives, we must at the same time reaffirm the factors that should be considered in its reform process so that it can be undertaken in the enlightened interests of all and with respect for the rules and procedures governing the institution. First, the objective of eradicating poverty should remain UNDP's highest priority and should not be burdened with any ambiguity or preconditions. Secondly, Africa is the region most affected by poverty, and it must remain the principal area of UNDP action. Thirdly, whatever reforms may ultimately be introduced, the Programme must preserve its international nature; it must be neutral and respectful of the sovereignty of States and must maintain the character that has always made it an organization that enjoys the fondness, respect and confidence of the people of our countries. Fourthly, this reform process must respect the competence of all those taking part in defining the status and the mandate of UNDP — the General Assembly, the Governing Council and the UNDP Administrator himself.

In this regard, we are happy to note the assurances given by the UNDP Administrator, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, to the African Group last month, in particular as regards the high priority that UNDP will continue to give to Africa and to the eradication of poverty.

Another equally important area where we find cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU is obviously that of humanitarian action. As a logical consequence of the chronically unstable situation in certain parts of the continent and the constantly growing number of refugees generated by its convulsive conflicts, dealing with the humanitarian situation in Africa today is a major challenge to Africans and to the whole international community. Africa has 9 million of the 20 million refugees registered throughout the world, and to this we must add several million more displaced persons.

In this regard, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continues to give to Africa and the OAU valuable assistance in spite of many constraints. This year marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Cooperation Agreement between the

OAU and UNHCR, as well as of the African Convention on Refugee Problems. On 12 July 1999, at the Algiers summit, an OAU prize for exceptional services rendered to refugees and displaced persons in Africa was created and awarded to two African States.

The Sudan hosted in Khartoum, in December 1998, a meeting intended to find solutions for the problems posed by refugees in Africa. One month later a special OAU/UNHCR/International Committee of the Red Cross team was created in Addis Ababa to follow up and implement the recommendations of that conference.

Furthermore, UNHCR and the OAU are cooperating closely in the implementation of a plan of action of the OAU Commission on Refugees, particularly to ensure the mobilization of international resources for the benefit of African refugees.

This is indeed the principal constraint facing humanitarian action in Africa — the absence or inadequacy of resources. Of a total of $796 million requested in the framework of the consolidated appeal for Africa, only 40 per cent has actually been received. In the circumstances, a number of humanitarian organizations have had to reduce their activities or establish priorities, sometimes having to make painful choices. Whether in Angola, in the Great Lakes region, in Guinea or in the Horn of Africa, tens of thousands of African refugees have thus lost the urgent support they need because of a lack of resources.

The Secretary-General and the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs have since then issued urgent appeals for the international community to mobilize some $0.5 billion to make it possible for humanitarian organizations to deal with what could well become a humanitarian catastrophe on the continent. At the same time, appeals launched for other parts of the world have received prompt and satisfactory responses, and the programmes of humanitarian agencies are being fully carried out. All this accentuates the feeling prevailing in Africa that there are first-class refugees and second-class refugees.

In my statement to the Security Council on 29 September 1999 on the subject of the situation in Africa, I pointed out that

> "Africa ... expects the rest of the world to accept it as a partner equal in rights and duties and a credible and responsible interlocutor — that is, a fully fledged participant in the conduct of international affairs and the restructuring of the world order." *(S/PV.4049, p. 11)*

This is the sense and purpose of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU (A/54/L.38), which I have the honour to introduce to the Assembly on behalf of the members of the OAU in the hope that it will be adopted.

This year's draft resolution has been examined particularly closely by the African Group, which reviewed all its provisions in order to adapt it and to ensure that it takes into account the concerns of Africa in the areas of prevention and settlement of conflicts, the maintenance of peace, economic and social development and humanitarian assistance.

It is our hope that this text, which has been the subject of broad agreement among other African partners, will be adopted by consensus, as has been the tradition.

**Ms. Rasi** (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report submitted under the agenda item under consideration. The report shows clearly how these two organizations are developing closer ties in order to work together effectively in various fields.

The European Union especially welcomes the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU aimed at enhancing their mutual capacity for preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa and for coordinating their efforts in that regard, in particular through the regular meetings of the two Secretaries-General and their senior advisers.

In this context, the European Union welcomes the Secretary-General's progress report (S/1999/1008) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the

report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

We are also particularly pleased to note that a United Nations liaison office with the OAU was established in Addis Ababa last year.

Today's debate on United Nations/OAU cooperation takes place at a very critical moment. On the one hand, we are able to observe some signs of political and socio-economic progress. On the other hand, more than a third of African countries are at present, or have recently been, involved in armed conflicts. The European Union is deeply concerned by the extension of armed conflicts, the huge influx of arms and military equipment and the increasing role of non-State actors in armed conflicts. The European Union cannot but remain deeply concerned that grave breaches of humanitarian law and human rights, the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons, attacks against humanitarian personnel, the use of child soldiers, ethnic hatred and arms trafficking remain among the key problems of regional and international concern.

Peace, security, sustainable development, human rights, democracy and good governance are interdependent. Crises are triggered by a range of factors, including social, ethnic or religious strife, the violation of human rights, poverty, inequitable distribution of and the fight for economic resources and commodities, environmental degradation and large-scale migration. The European Union is of the view that a serious challenge to the international community in Africa arises from a combination of these factors.

The European Union welcomes the renewed commitment of the Security Council to contribute to conflict resolution in Africa, which is reflected in several Security Council resolutions and presidential statements adopted during the past year. It notes the Council's determination to improve further its ability to prevent conflicts and to make its responses to conflicts more efficient and effective, and looks forward to further Security Council activity in this regard. We hope that the expeditious implementation of the many aspects contained in these resolutions will contribute to strengthening further the ties between the United Nations and the OAU.

While stressing the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, the European Union considers it essential that African countries and regional organizations play a leading role in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. We are committed to working in partnership with Africa to secure peace and democracy, respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, political stability and economic and social development. A number of concrete measures have been taken to strengthen African political will, ownership and capacity to focus on the prevention of violent conflicts.

The European Union commends the efforts by African leaders and States and regional and subregional organizations — in particular the Organization of African Unity — to resolve conflicts by peaceful means. Under its common position on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, the European Union is ready to assist in building capacities for conflict prevention in Africa, particularly through the OAU and African subregional organizations. We also recognize the importance of regional peacekeeping efforts in Africa and express our support for measures to develop African capacity in this regard. We welcome particularly the development by the OAU of plans to enhance its capabilities in this area and the issuing in October of its programme for strengthening the Conflict Management Centre. Many European Union member States attended the OAU's presentation of its plans to donors earlier this month in Addis Ababa. We will be considering how we can cooperate with the OAU in this area, and we call on other States to do likewise.

The European Union has adopted a Common Position on Human Rights, Democratic Principles, the Rule of Law and Good Governance in Africa. It gives a high priority to a positive and constructive approach with a view to supporting efforts of the OAU, subregional groups and individual countries to promote respect for human rights and good governance.

The European Union has a consultative mechanism with the OAU which we wish to develop further. We will strengthen the dialogue with the OAU and subregional organizations on concrete possibilities for backing their efforts, *inter alia* in the fields of early warning, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping and of awareness of the importance of respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, the rule of law, a pluralist society, democratic institutions and practices, and a culture of tolerance.

We welcome the OAU's favourable response to the European Union's proposal for the holding, in April 2000, of a summit of the heads of State or Government of the European Union and of Africa. We have started preparations for the summit, which should adopt a

balanced approach between political and economic issues, reflecting the global nature of the European Union-Africa partnership in order to ensure concrete results.

The European Union attaches great importance to the regular contacts and dialogue which it holds with regional and subregional organizations in Africa, and we are working to enhance our dialogue, *inter alia* with the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Eastern Africa and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Cooperation between the European Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has continued to progress, and a comprehensive dialogue has been established in various areas of cooperation.

Regarding the Great Lakes region, we give full support to the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations and the OAU as well as to those of regional leaders and other concerned personalities to restore peace to the region and promote national reconciliation. The European Union Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Mr. Aldo Ajello, will continue to work closely with the relevant organizations and personalities.

The European Union welcomes the signing of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement earlier this year by all parties involved and calls on all parties to implement it fully. The European Union will support the implementation of the Lusaka agreement, provided that the parties respect and implement it.

The European Union adopted, on 15 November last, the Common Position to support the implementation of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement and the process towards peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The European Union will contribute towards operational, non-military expenditure to enable the Joint Military Commission to deploy its observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during a six-month period and fulfil its tasks, as specified in its rules of procedure. To this end a reference amount of 1.2 million euro is foreseen. The funds will be channelled through the Organization of African Unity and be covered by a separate agreement with the OAU.

The European Union affirms that lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be achieved only through a negotiated peace settlement which is fair to all parties; through respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for democratic principles and human rights in all States of the region; and by taking account of the security interests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbouring countries. Once peace is restored, the European Union will be ready to consider long-term cooperation in support of national reconstruction.

The European Union strongly urges the parties involved in the conflict to respect human rights and humanitarian law and to abstain from acts of indiscriminate violence, especially against civilians, and ethnic propaganda and harassment. We urge the parties to secure safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance and its personnel.

The European Union will consider support for the concept of and possible preparations for an international conference on security and cooperation in the Great Lakes region in order to enhance political stability, conflict management and resolution capacities, and economic integration in the region.

The European Union is deeply dismayed at the resumption of civil war in Angola in December 1998, for which the responsibility lies primarily with UNITA, under the leadership of Mr. Jonas Savimbi. The European Union condemns the targeting of civilian populations, including refugees, and humanitarian organizations, and reiterates that both sides have an obligation to respect the rights of civilians and to stop using non-combatants in the pursuit of military objectives. The European Union is convinced that lasting peace in Angola can be achieved only through political dialogue.

The European Union reiterates its appeal to UNITA to cease military activities and implement its commitments unconditionally and without further delay. The European Union is taking every measure to fully implement the sanctions imposed by the Security Council against UNITA and urges all States to do likewise. It welcomes the decisions contained in Security Council resolution 1237 (1999), aimed at improving the implementation of the sanctions regime against UNITA. In this context, the decision on Angola adopted at the OAU Summit in Algeria is an encouraging step.

The European Union welcomes the Angolan Government's decision to accept a continued multidisciplinary United Nations presence in Angola and is looking forward to its establishment. We consider that a United Nations presence, including a humanitarian

rights component, will contribute positively to a peaceful settlement of the Angolan conflict.

The European Union welcomes the efforts of the OAU to bring a negotiated settlement to the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. We strongly support the OAU package of peace agreements and the mediation through its Algerian presidency to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict. We urge both parties to implement the peace agreements and to refrain from hostilities.

With regard to Sierra Leone, the European Union encourages all parties to the peace agreement to do their utmost to foster the peace and reconciliation process in the country. We call on all parties to implement the Lomé Peace Agreement fully and appeal to all combatants to lay down their arms and participate in the disarmament programme.

Regarding the conflict in Somalia, which has taken a terrible toll, especially among civilians, the European Union remains deeply concerned at the Somali leaders' inability to negotiate a peaceful settlement of their disputes. The European Union calls upon both parties in the civil war in the southern Sudan to cooperate constructively and to reach an agreement to end the long-standing conflict. The European Union remains concerned about the human rights situation in the Sudan, although we have noted that some positive developments have taken place. The European Union has decided to start a critical dialogue with the Government of the Sudan, in which issues such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law are key areas.

For the European Union, Africa's sustainable development is a priority. The commitment of the European Union to Africa is based on shared interests, values and objectives. We wish to help Africa achieve peace and stability in order to improve the quality of life of its people. An enabling political environment conducive to human rights, good governance and a vibrant civil society are essential for sustainable development. In this respect, development cooperation has to play an important role.

The European Union remains committed to the fight against poverty and to meeting the target of reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015. The European Union is the world's leading source of development assistance to Africa, providing more than two thirds of the total official development assistance flows to sub-Saharan Africa. Development assistance plays a key role in supporting the policies pursued by the African countries. This is particularly the case in the least developed countries, three quarters of which are in Africa. Donors and African countries share responsibility for ensuring that development assistance is used effectively.

The European Union is currently negotiating the renewal of the Lomé Convention. The challenge is to put European Union political, trade and economic cooperation on a new footing to cope with poverty, social and political instability and the effects of globalization. For the European Union, an active development policy with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries is an important component of its global responsibility. We are actively committed to improving the operational coordination of development cooperation among ourselves, with partner Governments and other international development actors, such as the United Nations family and multilateral development banks.

External debt continues to be a serious impediment to sustainable development for many African countries. Unless the external debt is reduced to sustainable levels, especially for the poorest countries, the benefits of reform are at risk of being swallowed up by increased debt service. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative provides a major opportunity for achieving debt sustainability and should be speedily extended to more countries within the terms agreed upon. We welcome the progress recently achieved at the Cologne economic summit and at the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, including the recognition that the central purpose of debt relief is poverty reduction. The 1999 Cologne debt initiative is designed to provide deeper, broader and faster relief through major changes to the HIPC framework.

Africa bears the primary responsibility for creating an environment where development is sustainable and prosperity ensured. Each Government has to take good governance seriously, ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law and strengthening democratization.

In conclusion, let me underline the importance of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. We want to encourage the strengthening of this process and to bring the expertise and political weight of both Organizations together in order to best face the challenges of the next millennium.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*

United Nations A/54/PV.73

# General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

*Official Records*

**73**rd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 8 December 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

*President:* Mr. Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

**Agenda item 31** (*continued*)

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/54/484)**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.38)**

**Mr. Petrella** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report of 21 October 1999 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). This, and the report on the implementation of the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace in Africa, demonstrate the importance of cooperation between the two organizations in seeking a definitive solution to the problems of Africa.

The Secretary-General has indicated that cooperation with the OAU has increased, both quantitatively and qualitatively. His report reveals the high level of cooperation that has been achieved between the secretariats and various agencies in the field of peace and security, economic and social matters and other areas. In this respect, we feel it to be indispensable to maintain the kind of close, high-level contacts that were achieved at the OAU summits in Algeria in July and in New York in September this year.

This would not seem to be the appropriate moment to refer to the various conflicts plaguing Africa, but we can make certain reflections on what the United Nations might do to contribute to a solution to these. In this regard, I would mention the debate that took place on 29 September in the Security Council on the situation in Africa, which was attended by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Salim, and the Permanent Representative of Algeria, who spoke on behalf of the Chairman of that organization.

One of the main conclusions reached was on the need to expand cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in Africa. In our opinion, this cooperation should have a comprehensive focus, taking the following elements into account.

First, the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace falls without exception to the Security Council. Secondly, in order to obtain its objectives, the Council needs close cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in Africa, particularly with respect to prevention and early warning. Thirdly, in order to achieve durable peace in Africa, the minimum conditions for development must be established so as to eliminate the causes of conflict and to alleviate their humanitarian consequences. Here, the various United Nations agencies

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and the Bretton Woods institutions must join forces in support of the efforts of the African countries themselves. The Algiers Declaration, adopted at the OAU summit, bears witness to this need. Fourthly, reconciliation within societies that have suffered conflict must be pursued emphatically and with a sense of realism.

Although some conflicts in Africa have not yet been settled, we have noted a positive trend developing throughout the year. Complex issues, such as those of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone, have yielded to negotiation thanks to the imaginative input of regional leaders and organizations. The United Nations must support these initiatives in order to maintain and consolidate the peace achieved at such expense. In this regard, we feel that cooperation among the organizations of the region is indispensable.

We wish to reaffirm Argentina's commitment to Africa. From the outset, we have participated in and promoted the process of decolonization. Today, we support the rule of law and the opening of the region's economies. We have increased our trade and technological exchanges and strengthened our political and cultural relations.

At the multilateral level, Argentina, along with African countries, has promoted the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Atlantic. Similarly, the fifth ministerial meeting of the members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, held in Buenos Aires in October last year, was attended by representatives of 21 African and three Latin American countries. Argentina is currently coordinating the zone's Permanent Committee and has proposed to the member States a series of initiatives to deepen cooperation.

In conclusion, I wish to stress the role played by the African countries themselves within the OAU and subregional organizations in the search for solutions to their problems. This trend, which has been growing throughout the year, requires all the support of the international community.

**Mr. Bouah-Kamon** (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): In the Algiers Declaration, adopted in July 1999 at the end of their summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) reaffirmed their responsibility for ensuring peace and stability on the African continent and for establishing institutions to promote balanced and fair economic and social development for all countries. In order to attain these objectives, they stressed the need to strengthen the Organization of African Unity.

Two months later, at Sirte in Libya, the fourth extraordinary session of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU considered the ways and means of strengthening the organization with a view to rendering it more effective and adaptable to social, political and economic changes and to making it the preferred instrument for collective action for Africa and for cooperation with the rest of the world.

The ideal framework for this cooperation with the rest of the world is clearly the United Nations, the fulcrum for the international community's initiatives for Africa. My delegation attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, which is governed by the agreement of 15 November 1965 that was updated on 9 October 1990, given the decisive role played by the world Organization in the maintenance of peace and the promotion of development in Africa.

This cooperation between the two organizations affects many fields of United Nations activity and, in growing, must seek to promote partnership while avoiding competition and duplication of effort and to increase exchanges of information and studies while strengthening the institutional capacities and the expertise of the African organization in many sectors. The strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU must follow three broad directions.

First, the participation of the OAU in United Nations activities and initiatives on Africa must increase. The United Nations Special Initiative for Africa, conceived as an instrument for implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, was designed without the contribution of OAU experts. While it is true that the Special Initiative is a framework for coordination of United Nations activity to promote African development, joint action with the OAU could consolidate the success of its implementation. My delegation encourages the cooperation of all institutions entrusted with the implementation of the Initiative and welcomes the fact that the OAU and the African Development Bank have been invited attend, as observers, the work of the Steering Committee of the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa.

In order to achieve their objectives, the programmes concerning the promotion and the protection of human

rights, democratization in Africa and good governance and the actions taken within the framework of preventive diplomacy should involve OAU mechanisms and institutions. The initiatives taken by the various United Nations programmes, funds and agencies to involve the OAU further in their activities concerning Africa are praiseworthy, particularly the coordination of activities between the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the OAU concerning the question of good governance in Africa and the preparation of the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

As regards conflict prevention, the contribution of the OAU to the study of the causes of conflicts in Africa could enrich consideration and bring innovative ideas drawn from its long experience in the field. Its participation in the debate and close collaboration between the two secretariats in conflict prevention and settlement must be pursued and intensified.

The Economic Commission for Africa has collaborated with the OAU in identifying common African positions in the preparation of major United Nations conferences of the 1990s. In the follow-up to these conferences, it would be desirable to initiate regional meetings and studies, in collaboration with the OAU, on the impact of these conferences on Africa's development, on the progress achieved and on new measures to be taken to accelerate the attainment of objectives.

Secondly, to increase United Nations support for the activities and the initiatives of the OAU, the heads of State and Government of the OAU decided at Algiers to proclaim the year 2000 the year of peace in Africa. This political will will become a concrete reality only if the efforts of African Governments go hand in hand with those of the international community not only to restore peace in zones of conflict, but also to prevent and to halt the outbreak of new conflicts in sensitive zones. To that end, the United Nations must strengthen its support for the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa and help it to progressively develop its potential for conflict prevention and settlement. The international community must support African efforts by providing the material means and the logistics necessary for peacekeeping operations.

Africa is declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone through the Treaty of Pelindaba. The United Nations must contribute to the training of African experts in the field of the protection of the continent from nuclear weapons and wastes, and in demining.

The Abuja Treaty established the African Economic Community, aiming at the progressive establishment of African economic integration. The United Nations and its organs, such as the Economic and Social Council, the specialized agencies and programmes, must not lose this perspective when they develop projects for Africa. The regional or subregional approach must be taken into account to promote the continent's economic integration. For example, the World Bank should finance transnational road infrastructures and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) should propose regional projects in view of this integration so desired by African countries. We congratulate the ECA for the project on promoting economic integration through the creation of an African economic community and for the draft protocols to give effect to the Abuja Treaty.

Africa faces a stark shortage of resources. The United Nations, an organization represented worldwide, could make its structures available to the OAU, with a view to facilitating the mobilization of resources towards Africa, supporting the campaign for the cancellation of the African debt and advocating the increase of resources, of official development assistance and of the prices of export products.

The United Nations should listen more to Africa and acknowledge the needs expressed by the continent. The recent opening of a United Nations office at the OAU will facilitate communication between the two organizations and will strengthen their cooperation.

Thirdly, regarding the promotion of joint initiatives of the United Nations and the OAU, my delegation is happy to note that such initiatives are increasing between the two secretariats.

At the time of the Rwandan crisis, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the OAU appointed a joint representative in the Great Lakes region. It is a good initiative which deserves encouragement, after all the aspects of such a mission have been seriously examined.

Ministerial conferences have been organized on the refugees and displaced persons in Africa with the cooperation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on good governance with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme and on human rights with the support of the

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

It is appropriate to welcome the cooperation for electoral assistance in Africa, which permitted honest, transparent and democratic elections to take place in recent years. The two secretariats have increased consultations and exchanges of information with a view to strengthening their common capacities to prevent and settle conflicts in Africa and should work jointly toward that end. This close cooperation must be pursued in order to allow the two organizations to achieve their common objectives, those of maintaining peace and of promoting economic and social development for the peoples of Africa.

**Mr. Satoh** (Japan): The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in addressing the issues of conflict prevention and economic development, cannot be overstated. Japan therefore supports the enhanced mutual cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as outlined in the Secretary-General's report.

The OAU has been engaged in admirable activities in order to advance the cause of peace and prosperity in Africa. Its efforts were instrumental in facilitating various peace agreements in the conflicts in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The OAU's leadership in mobilizing international political, financial and material support for the Economic Community of West African States initiative in Liberia is highly commendable. So are its patient efforts to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Moreover, the OAU's comprehensive framework of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa is an important piece of work for peace on the continent.

But the OAU's activities need much support from African countries and their partners in the developed world. Such cooperation, particularly between the United Nations and the OAU, is essential, for example, in order to ensure that the OAU Mechanism functions effectively.

Japan, for its part, has been extending financial support to the OAU Peace Fund, which finances the OAU's activities to implement the comprehensive framework. Over the past five years, Japan's contributions to the Fund have amounted to $1,450,000. These contributions have been utilized for various conflict prevention and democratization activities, including the establishment of an early-warning system in the OAU, the Comoros peace talks, the Burundi peace process and the presidential election in Nigeria. Recently, Japan assisted the OAU Liaison Office and Neutral Facilitator during the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to continue to provide financial support for the activities of the OAU.

As we all know, it is essential to prevent the recurrence of conflicts in order to ensure the development of many countries in Africa, where peace is often fragile and poverty hampers efforts for post-conflict rehabilitation and reconciliation. In this context, we fully support the view expressed by Mr. Salim Salim, Secretary-General of the OAU, at the Security Council in September this year with regard to the need for timely action by the international community, particularly the United Nations and the Security Council, to support the promotion of peace by the OAU.

It goes without saying that what we need most for conflict resolution and conflict prevention in Africa is increased international attention. That is essential in order to raise the level of international cooperation, not only with the OAU but also with the countries concerned for their activities at all stages of conflict resolution and conflict prevention, as well as post-conflict reconstruction.

We therefore welcome this opportunity for the Members of the United Nations to discuss cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. It is a strong hope of the Japanese Government that this discussion will help enhance the level of international attention to the issue of conflicts in Africa.

**Mr. Tekaya** (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): While associating itself with the statement made yesterday by the Algerian delegation on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) under this agenda item, the Tunisian delegation would like to raise a few issues in connection with this item.

My delegation would first like to reiterate the particular interest of my country, Tunisia, in cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. We would like to pay tribute to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his continuous efforts to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations. We would also like to express our deep gratitude for the report he presented to the General Assembly on this item.

The Tunisian delegation is pleased to note the interest of the United Nations system in Africa. The Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa reflects this interest. In the report the Secretary-General recommends a series of important activities in favour of peace, stability and development in Africa. Cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU covers a number of areas, such as peace and security and economic and social development. Achievements recorded thus far and listed in the Secretary-General's report are encouraging and deserve to be followed up.

From its inception the OAU has embodied the aspirations of the African peoples and countries for the unity of the continent. It has played a decisive part in affirming the political identity of the continent and in promoting rapprochement, solidarity and cooperation among its States. It has thus become the preferred framework for all African collective action and for the continent's relationships with the rest of the world.

The OAU has also articulated the will of the African States to tackle jointly the many political, economic and social challenges which confront them. However, the solutions to many of these challenges depend on the commitment and support of the international community as a whole. Therefore, we are gratified to note the priority attached by United Nations organs to the development of Africa. Several economic and social programmes and initiatives have been launched over the years by the United Nations system in favour of Africa, and we appeal for their harmonization.

My delegation welcomes the regular consultations being held among officials of these two organizations in the priority fields of cooperation and coordination. These consultations enhance the links of cooperation between the two organizations.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in the field of peace and security in recent years has shown remarkable progress, making possible close coordination of efforts to manage and resolve certain conflicts in Africa peacefully. We appeal to the United Nations and its Member States to continue to increase their support for the OAU in order to strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa. Since its creation only a few years ago, the Mechanism has produced positive results despite its limited means. It is an invaluable tool for the continent and deserves to be strengthened.

In this context, we would like to reaffirm that Africa's will to shoulder its responsibilities should not relieve the United Nations of its own obligations for maintaining peace and international security deriving from its Charter.

The OAU and its member States have made continuous efforts to promote cooperation and economic integration with a view to implementing the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. The continuous support of the United Nations and the specialized agencies for these efforts will accelerate the establishment of the African Economic Community.

As the twenty-first century dawns, the African countries appeal for an international partnership that is mutually beneficial, based on interdependence, solidarity and cooperation in order to derive the benefit of the potential of globalization and in order to meet its challenges. We hope that all the friends of Africa will hearken to this appeal.

**Mr. Aboul Gheit** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). There is no doubt that this report assumes special importance at a time when we are experiencing an increasing need to deepen and enhance cooperation between the two organizations in development, social, economic, military, political, diplomatic and other fields, all of which aim at serving the common interests of the African continent in general, and at upgrading the structure and institutional capacities of the OAU, in particular.

In this respect, may I express appreciation of the continuous efforts of the United Nations Secretariat and of the OAU secretariat for strengthening the mechanism for cooperation and consultation between the two organizations which culminate with meetings between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAU twice a year, once in conjunction with the OAU summit and once in conjunction with the session of the General Assembly in New York.

During the past year, the African continent has experienced an escalation in the number of armed conflicts, from the Great Lakes region where the conflict rages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the conflicts in the Horn of Africa between Ethiopia and

Eritrea, to the crisis afflicting Somalia since 1991, to West Africa where the civil war in Sierra Leone has witnessed the perpetration of atrocities and gross violations that recall the genocide experienced by Rwanda in 1994, to the situation in the south where the conflict in Angola continues because of the failure of UNITA to fulfil its commitments under the Lusaka Protocol.

At the same time, no fair-minded observer can deny that Africa — on the continental level represented in the OAU and on the regional level represented in subregional organizations — has redoubled its efforts in order to achieve African solutions to African conflicts and to tackle the challenges facing the continent on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

This desire by Africa is evidenced in the achievement of the ceasefire agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was signed in Lusaka; the peace accord in Sierra Leone, which was signed in Lomé; the fact that the OAU and its current Chairman have taken the initiative to settle the Ethiopian/Eritrean conflict; and finally, the choice of President Mandela as a new mediator for the peace process in Burundi.

If the international community expects Africa to assume its responsibilities and to activate its efforts for the maintenance of international peace and security on the continent, Africa expects the international community, represented in the United Nations, to assume its collective responsibility towards the continent in implementation of the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter, and not simply to express its support for Africa's efforts to settle conflicts raging in its territories.

I cannot fail to address the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The parties to the conflict signed the ceasefire agreement on 10 July, about five months ago. Regrettably, thus far the Organization has only despatched scores of military liaison officers to the capitals of the States members of the Joint Military Commission and to a number of field positions inside the Congo.

It is also regrettable that the Security Council did not establish the peacekeeping operation, whose deployment has been delayed for a long time. Nor did the Council even grant a clear and explicit mandate to the Secretary-General to deploy the 500 military observers authorized by the Council by its resolution 1279 (1999). In this respect, we had expected the Council to accord the same interest to this conflict and to assume the same degree of responsibility for its settlement as it did in Kosovo, East Timor and other regions, in a manner that would not prompt us to question the real reasons for the absence of the political will and, in some cases, the financial will on the part of the international community to settle conflicts in the African continent.

*Mr. Baali (Algeria), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The enhancement of cooperation between all the major bodies of the United Nations and the OAU in various fields is necessary for the settlement of the disputes that are raging in the continent, as well as for the promotion of socio-economic and human development in its States. In this connection, we welcome the valuable role played by the United Nations liaison office at Addis Ababa. We hope that role will be strengthened and that the office will have the financial and human resources necessary to carry out its numerous activities — activities that will undoubtedly escalate in response to the requirements imposed by the increasing coordination and cooperation between the two organizations.

We also call on the United Nations to increase its assistance to the OAU in order to strengthen the operational and institutional capabilities of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, in particular by developing the Organization's regional capabilities in early warning and logistical support and by mobilizing the financial resources generated by the two trust funds established by the United Nations and the OAU for those purposes.

In the same vein, we look forward to continued efforts by the United Nations to upgrade African capacities in peacekeeping operations. We welcome the recommendations contained in the study prepared by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in March 1999 on cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements and organizations. This study took into account and reaffirmed the role played by regional organizations in peacekeeping. However, that role should not prejudice the responsibility of the United Nations under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In the social and economic fields, the United Nations plays a unique role in the development process on the African continent by continuously supporting the building of the OAU's institutional capacities to promote regional economic integration of the States of Africa and to enhance the continent's ability to take advantage of international and bilateral initiatives to promote

development. I would like to commend the efforts made by the United Nations, its bodies and its implementing agencies to support the continent as it tackles the major challenges before it. Those efforts include developing human and institutional capacities, combatting poverty and creating a socio-economic environment conducive to the prevention of conflicts.

Allow me, in conclusion, to touch briefly on a question to which Egypt grants special importance. While we hope that the United Nations will enhance its role in the settlement of the various conflicts in Africa and intensify its efforts to promote economic progress and sustainable development on the continent, we would also like to recall that the Charter of the Organization assigned to the General Assembly a role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Assembly therefore has an inherent responsibility in this regard. This fact has always prompted us to restate the principle of full respect for the delicate balance between the major organs of the international Organization as set out in the Charter, in particular the inherent role of the General Assembly in considering principles of cooperation aimed at relieving human suffering, including addressing the causes of conflict and the strengthening of lasting peace and sustainable development.

In this connection, we wish to express our surprise and regret at the fact that the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict in Africa was submitted only to the Security Council and not to the General Assembly and the other competent bodies of the United Nations system. We have already, and unsuccessfully, called for rectifying this situation. The progress report includes whole chapters that do not fall within the purview of the Security Council, such as those dealing with humanitarian assistance, development, trade, indebtedness, good governance and other issues. Those issues should be debated in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the other relevant bodies and agencies of the system.

**Mr. Kiliba** (United Republic of Tanzania): We thank the Secretary-General for his report, which provides valuable information on measures taken with a view to enhancing cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). We welcome these steps. We believe, however, that further efforts should be made to enhance that cooperation.

As we approach the new millennium, Africa and the OAU face a host of challenges, most of which will require continued support from and cooperation with the international community, especially the United Nations. In Africa the task of recovery and reconstruction remains formidable after the cold war, deep economic crises and humanitarian emergencies.

The *raison d'être* of the OAU, as embodied in its charter, is the attainment of peace and security, freedom and justice and economic and social development through common efforts among the African States. The OAU charter therefore seeks to promote within Africa the main purposes and principles enumerated in Article 1 of the United Nations Charter. The objectives of the two organizations are compatible even though the order of priorities may not be identical. Needless to say, the OAU's goals of attaining unity, development, security and liberation can best be achieved under conditions of universal peace and security and international cooperation in all the problem areas enumerated in the charters of both organizations.

We see four broad areas where the interaction of the OAU and the United Nations would be especially meaningful.

The first pertains to the management, resolution and prevention of conflicts. There is no denying that this is one area where the United Nations has had considerable global experience and could therefore be of great assistance in strengthening the capacities of the OAU in that regard. We therefore note with appreciation that the report of the Secretary-General indicates that some resources have been provided through the United Nations Development Programme — to the tune of about $3 million — to strengthen the capacity of the OAU for conflict prevention, management and resolution. We believe that this partnership should be enhanced and increasingly focused on building the anticipatory, prevention, negotiation and peacemaking capacity of the OAU. Moreover, the capacity for peacekeeping must rightly be built within Member States, primarily on behalf of the United Nations, as well as the OAU and subregional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States. In this regard, we wish to thank those countries which have contributed to African capacity-building in terms of training and logistical support, as well as by making financial contributions to the OAU Peace Fund.

The second area is cooperation in the management of African humanitarian emergencies. As a result of inter-State and intra-State conflicts in the continent, the problems of African refugees and displaced persons have grown in magnitude while resources have been dwindling. Since the root causes of the refugee problem and the displacement of populations have not as yet been effectively addressed, the continued response capacities of the OAU and of the United Nations will remain critical.

The third area is the strengthening of collaboration between the two Organizations in the setting up of structures and norms. The OAU has striven to promote the adoption of various conventions, charters, declarations and programmes of action among African States with regard to social, economic, refugee, human rights, environmental, democratization and governance issues. In some cases, this has been a specific complement to United Nations efforts. Such demonstrable efforts to fulfil this shared vision and aspiration require deliberate mutual support.

The fourth area is cooperation in promoting African development. The magnitude of the African economic challenges is obvious. The OAU members constitute about two thirds of the world's least developed countries, whose existence is marked by a debilitating debt burden and a sharp fall in commodity prices. A response to African economic problems would also strengthen the OAU, and therefore its role in contributing to the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations, and it would act as a meaningful response to the problems facing Africa, which for so long have placed a heavy burden on the efforts and resources of the United Nations and the OAU.

The OAU and Africa have committed themselves to pursuing a course that would liberate them from the seemingly intractable problems they face and therefore free Africa from being seen as a continent in turmoil and strife. In realizing this objective, the OAU and Africa will require the support of the United Nations. A commendable beginning has been made by establishing the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and putting in place structures for promoting economic development, human rights and democracy. Crucial to this process is the OAU's role in policy harmonization and implementation, which still require reinforcement. In a world of dwindling resources, the United Nations role of supporting the OAU and speaking for it and, therefore, for Africa, remains vital. The success of both the OAU and the United Nations in Africa depends on their close collaboration.

**Mr. Ka** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all to congratulate the Secretary-General on the quality of his report (A/54/484) on agenda item 31, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity". This cooperation is of particular importance for my delegation because, happily, it brings together the legitimate quest of African countries for the recovery of the continent and the no less fundamental need to incorporate the universal virtues enshrined by the United Nations. The Assembly will therefore appreciate the fact that my delegation is particularly interested in deepening and expanding cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

In the political and security field, this cooperation has reached a decisive turning point because of the impetus provided by the Secretaries-General of the two Organizations. I am pleased to note that they meet periodically, in particular during or immediately before OAU summits and General Assembly sessions, in order to coordinate better their activities in various areas. My delegation would like to welcome the establishment to that end of the United Nations liaison office with the OAU, which will facilitate synergy in the activities of the two institutions.

The problems of security, and therefore of peace, are at the heart of the concerns of African countries. Despite the courageous reforms carried out in order to improve the macroeconomic framework and democratize political systems, the continent of Africa continues to be convulsed by many hotbeds of tension. The OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution illustrates the will of the African countries to establish and promote an environment of peace and security so as to strengthen those reforms for the specific benefit of their peoples. That is why my delegation appreciates the support given by the United Nations to the OAU in this field and welcomes the fact that the resources of the United Nations Trust Fund created for that purpose will continue to improve the ability to prevent conflicts and maintain peace in Africa. Likewise, the United Nations Development Programme is carrying out an important project in this area so as to enhance the capacity of the human resources of the secretariat of the OAU.

With regard to the follow-up to major crises, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, often working closely with his counterpart at the OAU, has appointed envoys or

personal representatives to the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. We are also encouraged by the consideration being given to the deployment of United Nations forces in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo so as to consolidate the Lomé Peace Agreement and the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

These various achievements in support of peace are, of course, encouraging. But such measures, however positive they may be, have not been able to prevent resentment from being expressed towards the international community, which is often timid when it comes to managing crises breaking out in Africa. While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council, supportive action by regional organizations, within the framework of concerted efforts, will always contribute to the proper management of crises that break out in various parts of Africa.

With regard to the question of refugees in Africa, I should like to stress that, despite the scale of the task — I need hardly recall the fact that there are 7 million refugees and displaced persons in Africa — the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has always managed to implement its programmes for the return of refugees to their country of origin once the minimum security conditions have been met.

The UNHCR has in the past successfully carried out such operations in countries such as Mozambique, and we wish to congratulate the High Commissioner and, particularly, her staff, who work in often dangerous conditions.

My delegation attaches great importance to the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons in the West African subregion, especially in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau, where the political situation has been evolving in a satisfactory way. My delegation therefore calls upon the UNHCR to continue its productive partnership with the OAU and lays particular stress on the importance of the mechanism for follow-up of the OAU Ministerial Meeting on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons held in Khartoum in December 1998.

Our consideration of the item before us also provides an opportunity to welcome the close — I might almost say "osmotic" — relationship between the OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The expertise of the ECA staff, backed by their extraordinary understanding of the specific characteristics of Africa, has made the ECA an essential partner for the development of Africa. From the Lagos Plan of Action to the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, the ECA has played an important role in formulating strategies for continental integration.

For its part, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in close cooperation with African countries, has recently begun the Alliance for Africa's Industrialization, the avowed purpose of which is to strengthen and diversify the secondary sector of the continent's economy.

The work of other agencies of the United Nations system has been equally excellent. The World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund are working to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to promote reproductive health. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) should be supported and encouraged by the donor community.

My delegation is convinced that the United Nations can do more and do better for Africa by further strengthening its cooperation with the OAU. As members know, since its establishment the OAU has undergone profound changes linked to the new concerns of its members. The decolonization agenda has been nearly completed, but the new challenges facing African countries — peace, security and development — are more complex in other ways. The OAU is therefore restructuring its secretariat with a view to strengthening it so that it can better face these challenges; those efforts deserve support in this crucial time in the history of the OAU.

My delegation reaffirms its faith in dynamic, multifaceted and mutually beneficial cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU, an organization to which the African countries are firmly committed.

**Mr. Kolby** (Norway): As we enter the twenty-first century, ensuring peace and development in Africa remains an issue of the most fundamental importance to the United Nations and to the world community at large. It is clear that the future of Africa rests primarily in the hands of the African countries. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), representing all the African countries, therefore has a crucial role to play in promoting peace and stability and in the future development of the continent.

At the same time, it is also clear that the world community must involve itself more actively, through partnerships and cooperation. Norway has consistently taken the view that all Member States, especially the rich industrialized countries, have a moral and political obligation to assist in bringing lasting stability and prosperity to the African continent, as well as a strong interest in doing so. Social and economic development in Africa must be a joint and global responsibility. Cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations, involving the African countries as well as the world community at large, is of vital value to our joint efforts.

The Norwegian Government welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU (A/54/484). It demonstrates the extent of interaction between the OAU and the United Nations in a wide range of areas. Norway notes with appreciation that cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU has expanded in the past year. The two organizations have great potential for reinforcing each others' efforts through practical cooperation, exchange of information and active coordination. An example of such cooperation was the very useful meeting on conflict management held in New York in April this year. Another example was the OAU Ministerial Meeting on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons held in Khartoum, Sudan, in December of last year, which was co-sponsored by the OAU and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with financial support from Norway. That meeting addressed important problems with respect to Africa's refugees and internally displaced persons. Norway also commends the cooperation between OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), focusing on issues such as good governance.

The Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318) clearly demonstrated that poverty, underdevelopment and violent conflicts are closely linked. We cannot address one without addressing the others. The Secretary-General pointed to the need for a comprehensive approach and for better coordination of conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building in the United Nations system. The Secretariat has already embarked on the process of implementation and follow-up in these areas. Norway fully supports the Secretary-General's initiative and is ready to provide practical and financial support for this important endeavour. We will set aside $3 million for use by the Secretariat for this purpose.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate Norway's firm commitment to peace and development in Africa. African countries are Norway's main partners in development cooperation. My Government intends to further increase our transfers of official development assistance, up to 1 per cent of gross domestic product. We will continue our efforts to mobilize the global political will and financial means to realize the target of cutting poverty by half by the year 2015.

Conflict prevention, humanitarian aid and development efforts must go hand in hand. We must deal with the root causes of conflict, not just the symptoms. Effective crisis management must include efforts to promote long-term and sustainable development, to combat poverty and to relieve poor countries of their unsustainable debt burden, as well as efforts to promote democratic and economic reform. The emphasis must be on creating a process involving bilateral donors, multilateral institutions, regional organizations and Governments in constructive partnerships.

Important decisions were reached at this year's OAU meeting in your own country, Mr. Vice-President, in Algiers. Referring to the principle that good governance, transparency and human rights are "essential elements for building representative and stable governments and contribute to conflict prevention", it was decided that those Governments that had come to power through unconstitutional means should no longer be expected to be received as equals in an OAU assembly of Heads of State. The OAU's active involvement in the follow-up of this decision augurs well for the future of Africa and for the cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations agencies.

Norway is encouraged by the determination that the OAU has shown in tackling issues related to good governance. An integral part of promoting sustainable human development is respect for all social and economic rights, as well as cultural, civil and political rights. In this regard, Norway welcomes the OAU's work on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. Norway commends the efforts of African leaders, States and regional and subregional organizations to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The OAU has an especially important role to play in promoting peace and stability in Africa. My Government strongly supports the ongoing efforts by the OAU and the Algerian presidency to ensure a peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Close collaboration between the OAU, the United Nations and national Governments is needed to

resolve this and other conflicts on the African continent. Norway will continue to stand ready to assist in efforts to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts in cases where we can play a constructive role in cooperation with the parties.

Norway has for many years contributed financially to strengthening African capacity in peacekeeping and conflict prevention and is committed to continuing its efforts in these areas. In the last year, we have supported the OAU process for restructuring its organization. Norway has also given financial support to the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

As reflected in the report of the Secretary-General, many United Nations organizations in the social and economic fields are promoting sustainable development in Africa. Cooperation between these organizations and the OAU, to the benefit of its member States, is of paramount importance. An example of this is the efforts to successfully combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic, involving the OAU and United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Norway provides significant financial resources in support of the crucial efforts of the United Nations to promote social and economic development in Africa.

In closing, my Government would like to call for even stronger support to the OAU by the international community. We also encourage even closer partnerships between the United Nations, OAU and African subregional organizations. Norway remains firmly committed to working with all of these and other relevant bodies, as well as African Governments, to achieve our common aims of ensuring peace, stability and development in Africa.

**Mr. Andjaba** (Namibia): Let me at the outset express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Indeed, enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU will certainly strengthen the capacity of the OAU in responding to the increasing needs of its member States. In this context, we welcome the ongoing contacts and consultations between the United Nations Department of Political Affairs and the OAU Observer Mission in New York. Similarly, the cooperation between the OAU and the special envoys of the United Nations Secretary-General provide an important and direct link, especially in the area of conflict prevention and management. We note the contribution of the United Nations experts in the design and modalities for the implementation of Agreements in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to mention but two cases. However, it is distressing to note that in the case of Sierra Leone, many months after the signing of the Peace Agreement, peacekeepers are yet to be fully deployed. The continued role of the United Nations in resource mobilization and the support of the international community in the implementation of peace agreements in Africa is therefore crucial. Furthermore, in this context, my delegation welcomes the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in assisting with mobilization of resources for the work of the Joint Military Commission and for the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in general. We concur with the view of the Secretary-General that the continuous provision of much-needed support for peacekeeping activities in Africa is necessary.

We call on the international community, especially the donor countries, to contribute to the Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa, as well as to the OAU Peace Fund aimed at assisting in building African peacekeeping capacities. The need for financial resources to enhance cooperation which will result in tangible benefits for the African people cannot be overemphasized.

The humanitarian needs of the African refugees and internally displaced persons require concerted efforts by the international community. Irrespective of media coverage, we the Members of this universal Organization should not abandon those in need in various parts of Africa. The continued provision of support by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to the OAU in developing its institutional facilities for humanitarian coordination and exchange of information for early warning is therefore essential.

As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, this year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the OAU/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Cooperation Agreement. Truly, this is not a time to celebrate, but a moment to ask ourselves what we can do together to eliminate the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons, in Africa and in the world at large. No countries have paid a higher price than those countries hosting refugees. In the case of Africa, many host countries are least developed countries. Thus, the

problem of refugees places an added burden on their already weak economies. We call for increased support to the host countries. We note the continuous activities of UNHCR in Africa, and we call on the international community to respond positively and adequately to the appeals of UNHCR so as to enable it to cater for the needs of refugees in Africa. Similarly, the security and safety of refugees need to be addressed. In this connection, support for the Coordinating Committee on Assistance and Protection to Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons is paramount.

Notwithstanding the difficult economic and social conditions existing in many African countries and the environmental and desertification-related problems, the continent is doing all it can to create conditions for sustained economic growth and sustainable development in Africa. Indeed, the trends in the world economy does not bode well for the majority of African countries. The process for the establishment of the African Economic Community is therefore an important phase in the African development process and will assist in consolidating the efforts of African countries to revive and develop African economies. In this context, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa can make a meaningful contribution through the full and effective implementation of the programme for the Decade.

Furthermore, support to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization is very important so as to enable it to carry out its programmes in Africa. In addition, the continued cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development secretariat is welcome, for it assists African countries in multilateral trade negotiations. We call upon the international community to support the capacity of African countries to benefit from the advantages offered by globalization and to deal with the risks and challenges it poses. In this connection, implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s is needed.

In addition, the realization and development of the African Economic Community will be advanced by collaboration between the OAU and the activities of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to provide technical assistance to OAU members so as to help them strengthen their capacities for macroeconomic management.

In the continent with most of the least developed countries and at a time when official development assistance is on the decline, the United Nations funds and programmes continue to play an important role in the economic and social uplifting of our people. In this context, the Namibian Government was honoured to host the twenty-second ordinary session of the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission in Windhoek in April this year. In this connection, we await the outcome of the World Health Organization (WHO) study on the impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa and its link to child labour. It is our earnest hope that the findings of this study will above all galvanize worldwide support for the efforts of African Governments to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Furthermore, the African Initiative for Malaria Control and Roll Back Malaria need support. In this regard, we welcome the WHO/OAU partnership, and we call on the international community to support the overall objectives of this Initiative. While the focus has been on HIV/AIDS, malaria remains the number-one killer disease in many African countries, including Namibia. It is therefore crucial to support malaria-research-related activities.

We view cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU as an important partnership with far-reaching benefits. The African heads of State, at the last OAU summit, held in Algiers, adopted a Declaration that, *inter alia*, stated:

> "While expressing satisfaction at the various cooperation initiatives and approaches in favour of Africa, we reaffirm our readiness and willingness to promote, with all our partners, a genuine partnership devoid of any selfish calculations for influence; a partnership that respects the unity of the continent and aims at the development of Africa, rather than using it as a mere reservoir of raw materials and market for manufactured goods; a partnership that enables Africa to achieve its integration, ensure its development for the benefit of its peoples and occupy its rightful place on the international scene for the mutual and inclusive benefit of the international community as a whole." (*A/54/424, annex II, p. 66*)

Finally, as we prepare to enter the new millennium, let us do so in a genuine spirit of cooperation for the benefit of all mankind.

**Mr. Muhammed** (Ethiopia): At the outset, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the

Organization of African Unity (OAU), contained in document A/54/484. Like reports of previous years, this report provides a clear description of the activities undertaken by the two organizations in the framework of their ongoing cooperation.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that the cooperation between the secretariats of the United Nations and the OAU has significantly improved since 1997. We welcome the current practice of holding regular consultative meetings between the heads of the two organizations, as well as the continued exchange of experience and coordination at the level of the various departments and agencies.

The establishment of the United Nations liaison office with the OAU also constitutes an important step to enable wider coordination and exchange of information between the two organizations. While the establishment of the liaison office is further testimony to the desire of the United Nations to work closely with the OAU, the effectiveness and contribution of the office will depend on the clarity of its mandate and terms of reference, including the extent of its relationships both with United Nations Headquarters and with the OAU. In our opinion, the liaison office, given its limited scope in terms of capacity and resources, should focus on the well-defined priority activities originally envisaged in the area of enhancing African capacity in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

My delegation attaches particular importance to the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. During the past year, the Organization of African Unity has continued its efforts aimed at the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the continent.

My country fully supports these efforts by the OAU, and has on various occasions made its own contributions to the resolution of conflicts in various parts of Africa. With respect to the crisis between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia has demonstrated its full respect for and commitment to the OAU by cooperating with its ongoing endeavours to resolve the crisis by peaceful means.

In dealing with this conflict, the OAU has once again shown its resolve and commitment to upholding justice and the principles enshrined both in its own Charter and in the Charter of the United Nations by adopting a Framework Agreement for the settlement of the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the modalities for the implementation of the Framework Agreement. These two documents, which have been endorsed by the OAU Heads of State and Government and accepted fully by Ethiopia, address the fundamental cause of the crisis between Ethiopia and Eritrea and provide for the withdrawal of the armed forces of the aggressor State from all Ethiopian territories forcibly occupied since May 1998.

The OAU's position against aggression is consistent with the role envisaged for regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, and as such requires the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, to take concrete action for its implementation. Regrettably, despite the efforts of the OAU, the intransigence of the aggressor State in its refusal to accept and implement the OAU peace proposal, coupled with the unbalanced position taken by the Security Council, resulted in major fighting between Ethiopia and Eritrea in February 1999 and in the continuation of the crisis.

As in many other conflict situations in Africa, the manner in which the crisis between Ethiopia and Eritrea has been handled by the United Nations, particularly by the Security Council, has not only undermined the very essence of cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations, stipulated in the Organization's Charter, but has also reinforced the widely held view regarding the double standards and lack of resolve of the Council in dealing with African issues. It was therefore, in the light of this sad reality, that the Foreign Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, in his address to the General Assembly at its current session, stated that

> "Africa has received little effective international cooperation, in particular from the United Nations, for sorting out its difficulties in the area of peace and security. Conflicts in Africa have had the fate of either being neglected or, when not neglected, being judged and handled by different standards." (*A/54/PV.21, p. 25*)

Experience has shown that, whether in the area of peace and security or in respect of economic development cooperation, Africa continues to be marginalized and least favoured for genuine cooperation. Hence, despite the efforts of most African countries, the economic situation in the continent remains precarious and

economic recovery and development continue to be severely hindered by multiple factors. The persistence of conflicts, the debt burden, the decline in official development assistance, the net outflow of resources and the conditionalities that international lending institutions lay down in providing access to development financing — to mention just a few factors — are paralysing growth and development in the continent. As these challenges show no sign of abating and threaten to deteriorate further, even on this very eve of the twenty-first century, the situation in Africa, including the role that the United Nations could play in cooperation with the OAU, needs a close and objective evaluation.

Notwithstanding the challenges and difficulties, especially in mobilizing international support for Africa, the United Nations has nonetheless remained engaged through its various agencies in many vital areas related to African economic recovery and development. In this context, my delegation acknowledges at the same time the important role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, which, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank, continues to play a crucial role in the establishment and consolidation of the African Economic Community (AEC) and of the subregional economic communities that will serve as building blocks for the AEC. Cooperation over the past year between the OAU and various United Nations agencies — such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and others — has also been encouraging.

With regard to social issues, we welcome the achievements made through OAU's cooperation with, among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The progress that the OAU and UNHCR have made with respect to the welfare of refugees in Africa is particularly worth mentioning. Similarly, the important support of WHO in such critical areas as polio eradication, malaria prevention and control and the struggle against HIV/AIDS in Africa needs to be further enhanced. In this respect, I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to United Nations agencies, the international community and donor countries to give more attention to Africa's struggle against the HIV/AIDS scourge, which is afflicting the continent at an alarming rate.

Since its establishment in 1963, the Organization of African Unity has endeavoured, in pursuit of the lofty objectives envisioned by the founding fathers, to meet the multifaceted challenges facing Africa. In the area of peace and security, OAU's efforts have culminated in the setting-up of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, while, in the sphere of economic development and regional economic integration, the conclusion of the Abuja Treaty and the establishment of the African Economic Community mark two more milestone achievements.

Therefore, these achievements and the efforts of Africa in general can be sustained and further enhanced only in a favourable international environment of genuine partnership on the part of the rest of the world. In this regard, the role of the United Nations and its cooperation with the OAU will remain indispensable in the years to come.

**Mr. Belinga-Eboutou** (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to associate myself fully with the message delivered yesterday at the 72nd meeting of the General Assembly by the Ambassador of Algeria, representing the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity is of particular importance this year. Indeed, on the eve of the twenty-first century, it must identify the future direction of the 25-year relationship between the United Nations and the OAU.

First enshrined in Security Council resolution 199 (1964) of 30 December 1964, through which the Council recognized the Organization of African Unity as a regional organization in the context of Article 52 of the United Nations Charter, this cooperation was solemnly established by the agreement of 15 November 1965 and flows from the wishes of the founding fathers of the pan-African organization themselves. Meeting in Addis Ababa in May 1963, African leaders clearly affirmed their desire to strengthen and support the United Nations, in particular in the search for and implementation of solutions to their fundamental problems.

How could it have been otherwise? We know that the OAU was created in conformity with the United

Nations Charter and that the relationship between the United Nations Charter and the OAU charter is evident. As the United Nations Secretary-General justly pointed out at the first session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in Cairo in July 1964:

> "The charter of the Organization of African Unity not only follows that of the United Nations in form, but ... it reaffirms the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations."

Beyond these similarities, the OAU charter also and particularly affirms specific objectives and important ambitions for Africa.

The African countries were in favour of formalizing cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU not only in order to make OAU activity more visible, but also and particularly to assure the full support of the United Nations in the pursuit of both the universal and specific objectives assigned to it.

Since 1965, many resolutions have been adopted on strengthening this cooperation, the latest of which was resolution 53/91 of 7 December 1998. An important road has been travelled and significant stages have been traversed within the framework of this cooperation. History will particularly remember that it was thanks to the joint and sustained efforts of the United Nations and the OAU that Africa and the world will have been rid of two major ills: colonialism and apartheid.

Beyond these important historical accomplishments, the Secretary-General's report before us provides us with an opportunity to express our appreciation for the important and ongoing efforts, with a view to strengthening healthy and fruitful cooperation between the two organizations. A reading of the report shows that these efforts have focused on broadening and strengthening the framework of cooperation, as well as on the search for concrete solutions to the various problems which Africa must face.

Regarding the broadening and strengthening of the framework of cooperation, my delegation welcomes the important decision taken by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OAU in January 1997 to meet twice a year, with a view to examining the priority areas of cooperation and to coordinating their efforts. My delegation also welcomes the establishment in Addis Ababa in April 1998 of a United Nations liaison office, the purpose of which is to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations. These are all measures which will likely permit better coordination and thus greater effectiveness in the initiatives of the two organizations, particularly those relating to high-priority issues.

Regarding the field of implementation, we welcome that cooperation has continued both in the fields of peace and security, with special emphasis on strengthening Africa's capacities for the maintenance of peace and in the field of economic and social development, another major concern of African countries.

Despite the joint efforts of the two organizations in support of actions conceived and carried out by the African countries themselves, as well as assistance provided by bilateral partners, we are forced to note that, on the eve of the new millennium, Africa is still encountering various vital problems. Such a situation is a challenge to the international community as a whole. It is an invitation to show greater imagination in devising solutions. It is an invitation to be more determined in the actions to be undertaken and to be more generous in their implementation. Lastly, it is a pressing invitation to shed the pervading and recurrent Afro-pessimism, which, as Kierkegaard said, leads nowhere.

At the dawn of the new millennium the African countries, fully conscious of the scope of their problems, adopted at Algiers and Sirte this year important decisions and identified priorities for action in the coming years. It is precisely in the light of these firm decisions and priorities of the heads of State, that the expectations of African countries on cooperation with the United Nations must be evaluated.

In the important Sirte Declaration, we can read in particular:

> "As we prepare to enter the twenty-first century, and cognizant of the challenges that will confront our continent and peoples, we emphasize the imperative need and a high sense of urgency to rekindle the aspirations of our peoples for stronger unity, solidarity and cohesion in a larger community of peoples transcending cultural, ideological, ethnic and national differences.
>
> "... It is also our conviction that our continental Organization needs to be revitalized in order to be able to play a more active role and continue to be relevant to the needs of our peoples and responsive to the demands of the prevailing

circumstances. We are also determined to eliminate the scourge of conflicts which constitutes a major impediment to the implementation of our development and integration agenda." (*A/54/621, annex*)

Whether we use a few words or 100 words, the point at issue is that the United Nations must, more than ever before, help the OAU attain its priority objectives of lasting peace and development for an integrated Africa in today's context of globalization.

From this viewpoint, the United Nations is invited to continue to contribute to strengthening the institutional and operational capacities of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa. It is also invited to support the subregional organizations working for the attainment of these same objectives, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Finally, the United Nations is invited to support and help strengthen the capacities of the African countries to allow them to benefit from the many possibilities offered to them by globalization and to mitigate their negative effects. Thanks to such support, globalization will mean for Africa cooperation and participation, and not marginalization.

Turning now specifically to the objective of sustainable development, my delegation would like to express its full appreciation for the role played by the United Nations through the United Nations Development Programme. At a time when a change in this organ is increasingly at issue, it strikes us that this is a most opportune moment to stress and to specify its role.

Finally, my delegation remains convinced that the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU also presupposes effective and equitable representation of African men and women in responsible decision-making posts in United Nations organs.

The draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, which is now before the General Assembly, embodies all these expectations of African peoples. The draft resolution, introduced yesterday by the Ambassador of Algeria, representing the current Chairman of the OAU, reflects the priorities and objectives of the African continental organization. Above all, it expresses Africa's vision of the kind of relations it wishes to have with the United Nations in the century to come.

On behalf of the member States of the African Group, my delegation hopes that this forward-looking draft resolution will be adopted by consensus. Africa will gain, and the United Nations will be strengthened.

**The President**: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I call on the representative of Poland, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

**Mr. Radomski** (Poland): I wish to state for the record that Poland associates itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union on the agenda item under consideration.

**The President**: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.38.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.38?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.38 was adopted* (resolution 54/94).

**The President**: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 31?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 20** *(continued)*

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.54)**

**(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions**

**Draft resolutions (A/54/L.49, A/54/L.53, A/54/L.56, A/54/L.57)**

**(c) Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.22/Rev.1)**

**(d) Participation of volunteers, 'White Helmets' in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.34/Rev.1)**

**The President**: Members will recall that the General Assembly held its debate on agenda item 20 and its sub-items (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) at its 58th, 59th and 60th plenary meetings, on 19 and 22 November 1999.

I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.54.

**Mr. Norström** (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, contained in document A/54/L.54.

The draft resolution was discussed in two rounds of informal consultations. In those consultations some valuable proposals were made for the improvement of the text, and agreement was reached on all paragraphs. My delegation is grateful for the contributions made by other delegations and for the good spirit of cooperation and partnership in which these consultations were held.

In the draft resolution, the General Assembly would recall its previous resolutions on the topic, take note of the report of the Secretary-General and welcome the progress made by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in strengthening that coordination. The General Assembly would welcome the second humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council held this past summer and the agreed conclusions from that session, and would call upon relevant actors to cooperate to ensure the implementation of and follow-up to the agreed conclusions.

Furthermore, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, early in the year 2000, concrete proposals in order to enhance the functioning and utilization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund.

Finally, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly, at its fifty-fifth session and through the 2000 session of the Economic and Social Council, on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

My delegation and the other sponsors trust that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

**The President**: I call on the representative of Tajikistan to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.49.

**Mr. Nurov** (Tajikistan): The delegation of Tajikistan has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.49, entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan".

The consideration and adoption of this draft resolution will show adequate support by the international community for the peace process in Tajikistan, which has entered its final stage.

My delegation believes that the continuation of the United Nations humanitarian programme in Tajikistan will make it possible to significantly complement the efforts of the Government to fully implement the General Agreement on peace in conditions of social security and will facilitate the establishment of necessary conditions for sustainable development in the transition period.

We warmly welcome the intention of the Secretary-General to issue a consolidated inter-agency appeal for humanitarian assistance in Tajikistan for 2000. As has been stated by the Secretary-General, humanitarian operations will remain a critical factor in ensuring stability in Tajikistan.

The draft resolution, in particular, welcomes the efforts aimed at achieving peace and national reconciliation, as well as the activities of the Secretary-General in drawing the attention of the world community to significant humanitarian needs of the country, and commends the efforts undertaken by States and organizations in responding positively to the country's humanitarian needs. It also recognizes that comprehensive international support remains essential for meeting the basic needs of the people and for strengthening the progress achieved in the peace process, and it requests

the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Tajikistan and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

We express our sincere appreciation to all the countries that have become sponsors of the draft resolution. Egypt, Pakistan and Slovenia have joined the list of sponsors, which should have originally included Kyrgyzstan. We also express our appreciation to the delegations that contributed to the final preparation of the draft resolution under the excellent coordination efforts of the Ambassador of Denmark, Mr. Jørgen Bøjer.

We hope that the draft resolution will receive strong support and that the General Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

**The President:** I next call on the representative of Cameroon to introduce draft resolutions A/54/L.53, A/54/L.56, A/54/56 and A/54/57.

**Mr. Belinga-Eboutou** (Cameroon) *(spoke in French)*: The General Assembly is today considering agenda item 20, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions".

On behalf of the African Group, I have the honour to invite the Assembly and, through it, the international community to focus its attention on the socio-economic situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Djibouti and at the same time to solicit increased humanitarian and financial assistance to support the recovery of these countries and peoples afflicted by war and natural disasters.

Indeed, I should be soliciting this manifestation of international solidarity for Africa as a whole. As the Assembly is aware, 44 per cent of Africans and 51 per cent of Africans in sub-Saharan Africa live in a state of absolute poverty. The armed conflicts that have for years been tearing apart the Horn of Africa and Central Africa have resulted in thousands of deaths, orphans, refugees and displaced persons — in brief, an unprecedented humanitarian disaster compounded by the collapse of economic and social and, sometimes, political infrastructures.

An improvement in the situation of these countries and peoples in distress necessarily calls for an increased mobilization of the international community to support efforts for peace now under way, but also requires collateral assistance to rebuild economic and social infrastructures. Meeting the fundamental needs of the people and improving their conditions of life is indeed both a precondition for and a guarantee of the establishment of a lasting peace.

That being said, may I briefly set out the content of each of the draft resolutions.

Draft resolution A/54/L.53 is entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo". There can be no economic recovery without peace, a healthy economic policy, good management of public affairs and the determined support of the international community.

Hence the appeal to all the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to respect the Lusaka Agreement and for a constructive dialogue. Hence, also, the urgent invitation to the Government to establish a state of law that respects the human person, to create an environment that is attractive to investors and to favour and promote the participation of all in the life and management of the country.

Hence, finally, the request to the Secretary-General to act in coordination with the OAU and the States of the region in searching for ways to bring about a settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the establishment of peace in the country and in the subregion.

Draft resolution A/54/L.56 deals with assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti.

The following countries have joined the African Group to become sponsors of the draft resolution: France, India, Italy and Oman.

The people of Djibouti are facing acute difficulties because of climatic hazards. Before, rains devastated the country, and now, drought has resulted in incalculable consequences.

This extremely precarious situation is exacerbated by the persistence of conflicts and instability in the region.

The courage of the people of Djibouti and the determination of their Government in pursuing the

consolidation of democracy and implementing a structural adjustment programme are exemplary. They expect increased and multifaceted assistance from the United Nations. They deserve it.

Draft resolution A/54/L.57 deals with humanitarian assistance to Somalia and with support for the economic and social rehabilitation of the country. The following countries have joined the African Group in sponsoring this draft resolution: Bahrain, China, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

The situation in Somalia is characterized by the absence of a central power and the need for ever-increasing humanitarian assistance. The draft resolution before the Assembly welcomes the action carried out under these conditions by the United Nations Secretary-General, in conjunction with the OAU and other regional organizations, to mitigate human suffering, remedy the situation in Somalia and re-establish its infrastructures and economic, social and political services in order to ensure its economic recovery. These efforts, like the assistance of the international community, call for the Somali parties to the conflict to demonstrate a willingness for national reconciliation.

All these draft resolutions are largely inspired by those adopted at previous sessions. They have but one objective: to prompt increased mobilization of international solidarity in favour of these countries and peoples who are dealing with acute difficulties that are sometimes due to nature but, unfortunately, are mostly due to human activity.

On behalf of the States members of the African Group and of the sponsors, I would like to thank the Assembly for the determined support it will demonstrate, as in the past, in support of peace and development in these countries by adopting these draft resolutions by consensus. The Congolese, Somali and Djiboutian peoples will remember.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.34/Rev.1.

**Mr. Petrella** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Argentina to introduce on behalf of the sponsors the draft resolution on the participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development.

My delegation would like to express its gratitude for the interest and support this initiative has received. We would like to report that in addition to the sponsors whose names appear on the draft resolution, Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Gabon, Greece, Jamaica, Madagascar and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have joined the list of sponsors.

This draft resolution seeks to reflect the progress that has been achieved. The White Helmets initiative, a mechanism of a voluntary nature that — either bilaterally or through cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and in collaboration with United Nations Volunteers — places at the disposal of the system teams of volunteers that have been previously trained and identified to respond in a rapid and coordinated manner to the need for humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development.

From its creation, the White Helmets initiative has clearly manifested its non-political, neutral and impartial attitude towards humanitarian action. The draft resolution we are introducing likewise aims to foster the creation of volunteer teams at both the national and regional levels that can serve as reserves to be made available to the United Nations through the United Nations Volunteers to serve in cases of emergency and for rehabilitation activities. The draft resolution calls upon Member States to promote cooperation between the United Nations system and the respective civil societies through national volunteer teams, forming an accessible world network of rapid reaction services available in cases of humanitarian emergency.

As the Secretary-General has stated on more than one occasion, and recently during his visit to Argentina, the active participation of civil society in the activities of the United Nations is an indispensable prerequisite for the success of humanitarian missions. This is the essential concept that motivates the draft resolution. We hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

**The President**: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/54/L.22/Rev.1, L.34/Rev.1, L.49, L.53, L.54, L.56 and L.57.

The Assembly will take a decision on the seven draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 20 and its sub-items (a), (b), (c) and (d).

Under sub-item (a) of agenda item 20, the Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.54, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations". Since the introduction of the draft resolution the following countries have become sponsors: Armenia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Gabon, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the Sudan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.54?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.54 was adopted* (resolution 54/95).

**The President:** The Assembly, under sub-item (b) of agenda item 20, will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/54/L.49, A/54/L.53, A/54/L.56 and A/54/L.57.

Draft resolution A/54/L.49 is entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.49?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.49 was adopted* (resolution 54/96 A).

**The President:** Draft resolution A/54/L.53 is entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.53?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.53 was adopted* (resolution 54/96 B).

**The President:** Draft A/54/L.56 is entitled "Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.56?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.56 was adopted* (resolution 54/96 C).

**The President:** Draft resolution A/54/L.57 is entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.57?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.57 was adopted* (resolution 54/96 D).

**The President:** Under sub-item (c) of agenda item 20, the General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.22/Rev.1, entitled "Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster".

I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.22/Rev.1: Cyprus, Malta and Turkey.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.22/Rev.1?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.22/Rev.1 was adopted* (resolution 54/97).

**The President:** Under sub-item (d) of agenda item 20, the General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.34/Rev.1, entitled "Participation of volunteers, 'White Helmets', in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development".

I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.34/Rev.1: Bangladesh and Cameroon.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.34/Rev.1?

*Draft resolution A/54/L.34/Rev.1 was adopted* (resolution 54/98).

**The President:** I should like to inform members that the Assembly will take action on other draft resolutions submitted or to be submitted under agenda item 20 and its sub-items at a later date to be announced.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (c) and (d) of agenda item 20?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 47** *(continued)*

**The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development**

**Draft resolution (A/54/L.27)**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/651)**

**The President:** Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on this item at its 56th plenary meeting, on 18 November 1999.

I should now like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the report of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/54/651 on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.27.

I should like to inform members that draft resolution A/54/L.24/Rev.1, entitled "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development", will be taken up at a later date.

We now turn to draft resolution A/54/L.27, entitled "United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of draft resolution A/54/L.27, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Uruguay.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.27. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 54/99).

**The President:** I call on the representative of Guatemala.

**Ms. Castellanos-González** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank all those delegations that joined in adopting draft resolution A/54/L.27. When the draft resolution was introduced, on 18 November, we explained why it was so important to us that the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) be extended, so I need not repeat our position today. Permit me merely to say that, in our view, the continued presence of MINUGUA in Guatemala is essential for the continued implementation of the Peace Agreements.

With a new Administration coming into office in January 2000, the resolution adopted today makes possible the continued presence of MINUGUA. For this we are most grateful.

**The President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 47.

**Postponement of the date of recess**

**The President:** I should like to draw the attention of members to a matter relating to the date of recess. Members will recall that at the 3rd plenary meeting, on 17 September 1999, the General Assembly decided that the fifty-fourth session should recess on 14 December 1999. However, the Assembly will not be able to conclude its work on Tuesday, 14 December. I should like, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that it postpone its date of recess until 17 December 1999.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to this proposal?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*